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THE SINNER AND THE PROBLEM.

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CHAPTER VIII.

It came about in this way. I had settled with them for an expedition to a certain spinney, distant perhaps a mile or so; they were to attempt the capture of a hawk's nest believed to exist in a hollow elm, and I was to sketch the central glade of the place,—a delightful opening of young bracken with grey rock right and left, and a tiny streamlet bubbling from pool to pool between. We were to start at half-past two; but when I had waited half-an-hour at the top of the chestnut-avenue and there was no sign of either of them, I began to wonder if we had understood each other, and the thought crossed my mind that possibly they were waiting for me elsewhere. Wherefore, deciding this to be the only explanation of their absence, I returned to the house and made enquiries; as a result, I learned that they had set out for the spinney near an hour ago.

I was a little annoyed at this, for it was one of the hottest days of the year, and dusty roads have but few attractions for me. I had found, too, no better recipe for the beguilement of such a tramp as this than the presence of my pair of tireless, irresponsible youngsters, and therefore I compassed my two miles in no easy humour. I abused my calling, and vowed never

to stir out of a studio for the rest of my life. Walking for walking's sake I have always detested; not perhaps to the extent of a certain friend of mine, whose sole ambition in life was a bungalow, basing a cynical view of existence on the ever-present necessity of stairs. Poor fellow! for when his wish was realised, he found that his spirit would take no rest unless nearer by fifteen feet to heaven at night; he could not sleep on the ground-floor.

And when I came to the spinney, and, setting my easel and all against a rock, stood and shouted, they were not there. A magpie clattered out of a thorn-bush,—one for sorrow, thought I—and then another, to make light of the proverb: a jay barked at me angrily and glinted, blue and pink, to the covert; and a pair of crows sailed in higher circles in the hot ring of sky. Beyond the wood I could see a gipsy-encampment, van and horses, laid lazily in the shade of a clump of elms; three barefooted children shaded their eyes and gazed suspiciously in my direction—a keeper, thought they, and would warn their men-folk. But of my pair of graceless nobodies there was not a sign.

Still the air blew about me clean and flower-scented, and the sun shone so gladly on the green branches, and

the water raced so merrily over the mosses and pebbles, that I soon had my picture chosen and began washing in my ground-tints. And by seven o'clock I had made so fair a start that I tossed up a prayer for fine weather and was off homewards, composing the while a flawless lecture on the merit of punctuality,—I who have kept more men waiting than would fill a Blue-book.

But at the gate I was met by mine host, and when he saw that I was alone, and heard that the two children had played me false, he was perplexed not a little. For it seemed that they (I had forgotten it) should have returned an hour back, for evening preparation or some such necessary discipline. At first he had laid the blame freely on myself, but now he was puzzled where to lay it, for the Sinner and Problem, many and varied as their escapades had been, never had gone so far before as to disregard conventionalities to the extent of more than a few minutes' quarrel with the school-clock in the momentous matter of preparation-time.

A thought struck me (not unwelcome in one sense, owing to the possibilities involved), that they might have come to some accident (a wetting perhaps) in company with the Lady of the Lake. And mine host thanked me from his heart (ignorant man!) when I offered to see if it were so. Off, then, I set to the lake, and found my Lady in the garden.

But she had neither heard nor seen anything of them, and I could find but little excuse for prolonging the interview. And to tell the truth, this was the only occasion when I made my talk with her shorter than I need have, for I was anxious to be away on a new quest; I had remembered the gipsies by the spinney. She made light of my anxiety, and

repeated that there was no need to expect anything but that they would return before nightfall with the laugh against us. I was not so certain of it; mine host had sterner notions of school-boy proprieties. She changed the subject to my paint-box, and I confessed to some hard work since last I saw her, part of the work being to decide what not to sketch.

"You can come to that decision easily at times," said she.

"I do not always paint a gloomy picture," I answered.

"Did you finish that one?" she asked.

"But I often paint my mood into a bright one," I continued.

"I see." Her eyes danced under the lashes, and the corners of her mouth began to twitch.

"That might have been a bright picture, too," I observed; but she was already ten yards off towards the house. "Good-bye," she said. "And don't add to your sorrows by puzzling over those two small friends of yours. Bo-peep and the sheep,—and they'll bring their tales with them, you may be sure." But she again stopped before she had gone very far. I halved the distance between us. "Do you care for interiors?" she asked with an air of seriousness.

"That depends upon the furniture," replied I.

She appeared to consider matters. "There's a tea-table," she said. "Suppose you brought the boys for me to scold,—let me see—on Sunday?"

"If I can find them for you," said I, adding the last two words to please myself. Verily, I believe if I had not had my object in coming to think over I should have thrown my hat in the air, when once round the corner. And yet the gods willed it that I never took advantage of that invitation; at least not the advantage I foresaw then.

There was no news of them waiting for me at the school; and I earned more gratitude from mine host (who was beginning to be seriously alarmed) by an offer to search the gipsy-campment. To aid me he offered a gig and one of the fat roans (a most unwilling conscript) and a stalwart gardener in addition to our driver. Under these conditions the two miles were covered again quicker than they had been six hours before in the afternoon.

But here was another disappointment. From the cunning-faced women and bronzed hard-visaged men that hemmed in the kettle and tripod we could learn nothing. Only the bare-footed children told a strange tale of voices that filled the spinney when the sun was high; outlandish oaths and echoes of oaths they reported. At any other time I should have caught at the chance of such models, for the fire of the wood-embers on one side and the glow of the western sky on the other threw quaint shadows and lights on their clear-cut bronze limbs and weather-tanned faces; and there were old women in the back part of the group whose eyes were riddles and histories for any who could read them. But I was in no mood to pick a model then; and supposing it possible that these sunburned thieves were concealing their knowledge in the hope of a reward, I believe I valued the Sinner and the Problem at five pounds apiece, to the astonishment of my comrade the gardener, who was for turning the van inside out there and then. But all I read on their faces when I made the offer was genuine regret that they were unable to deserve it.

Back, therefore, we went to the school, and saddened mine host with the tale of our ill-success. He, good man, had already made communication with the local constable, yet in

small hope of obtaining much from that worthy, whose office for ten years past had meant little more to him than the peaceful occupancy of a cottage and apple-orchard. Nothing to be done, said he, but to wait for the daylight. There were lanterns, —but where to look? For the strange part of it all was that no one had set eyes on either of the boys, except to watch them out of the gate, since luncheon.

To bed and sleep, then, they went, but I sat waiting with my pipe in the heavy-curtained little smoking-room, and the cuckoo-clock in the hall clucked out the hours with springs and whirrings and the slap of a shut door, till a blackbird woke in the laurels and whistled that morning had come, and I threw open the windows.

Out in the garden the dew lay heavy and grey on the lawn, but my blackbird roused his companions, and soon a merry chorus thrilled from every bush and tree. With a towel under my arm I strode out to the garden-pump; and the sluicing of that bright cold water left me clear and strong for a long day's work if need be. I had it in my mind to pull the fat roan out of his stall and drive him into the town; but that, I considered after, could help me very little till the townsfolk were out of bed. And finally I made up my mind to walk there, which I did, but without much hope of better luck with the town-constables. Nor were my expectations groundless, for the bluff, good-natured fellows had no news for me. At the inns I fared no better, and finally made haste to the junction, to catch the train back to the signal-box and wood-planking which served us in these parts for a station. And whom there should I see but the Chief Butler, grave, black-hatted, and important in bearing? "What news?" I asked.

"Well," said he, "I'm off to Axham. The police have telegraphed news of two boys there, who answer very fairly to ours, looking for a ship."

"Is that so? But then,—they could only have got there by rail: the place is thirty miles away; and no boys have asked for tickets."

"I don't know," said the Chief Butler, who was visibly annoyed at having the journey to take. "All I know is that if I find them—" It was a dire aposiopesis. "However, I'm paid for a first return," he soliloquised, stepped into a third-class smoking-carriage, and was twenty yards away from me before I had time to ask more of the telegram.

It was past eleven before I found myself at the school-gates, and visions of cream and coffee, rich red hams and new-laid eggs began to take the place of a certain picture I had been troubled with; a picture of two weary little forms trudging along a dusty road, heaven knows with what object or whither,—trust the Sinner for some mad project! But if I had known twelve hours before what I was to learn before the morning was out,—certes, but I should never have heard that blackbird wake in the laurels!

There were more thanks from mine host, and regrets at my useless journey. He relied strongly on the Axham telegram. "Of course," said he, "of course; some crazy sea-going notion,—silly boys, silly boys! But I'd wish them here, I'd wish them here," he repeated. "It never happened before, never before. I'd sooner have lost any boys than those two," he added. I knew he would have said this of any of the boys, but I liked him for it nevertheless. He then went into the schoolrooms, and I heard afterwards that many a lazy youngster blessed his stars that his dominie's mind was occupied with

other matters, and took small note of false concords and impossible cesuras. Marks ran high for the dullards that morning.

As for me, I wandered into my own room, and (I cannot tell with what prescience) idly took up a book I had been reading yesterday. Out tumbled a piece of paper I had never put there, a message, a letter from the Sinner, and folded three-corner-wise as I had taught him. "We are going to make an encampment on the river. Will you come and help us? From your affectionate Sinner."

Now when I have news of that sort I have no inclination to hurry and scramble. My thoughts come to me quickly, but they do not tumble helter-skelter, and they ran somewhat in this order.

The matron had reported the absence of the Sinner's and the Problem's travelling-rugs; therefore they meant to sleep at their encampment. They had no money; therefore they must be short of provisions, for they had not let the Lady of the Lake into the secret, and could only have abstracted a few crumbs of bread and a biscuit or so. If they had come to any accident, I must be quick, but must take some necessities with me. If they were drowned, I reflected, there was no hurry; but I knew they were not. Their encampment must lie up-stream,—the same stream that fed the lake, for it alone was known as the river; down-stream the water ran between open banks and the town.

And at last,—perhaps five minutes after I had the letter—I had sent a note to mine host that I was off on another expedition, with what hopes I did not say. I had stuffed my pockets with some hastily-cut sandwiches, a flask of brandy (I laughed over this at the time) and a roll of lint, which never was meant for the

use to which I put it, and was off down the fields to the head of the lake; nor as I went could I help laughing, despite my own uncertainties, at the certainty of the Chief Butler's failure. However, he was to make some pence over his journey; an entry for the black leather book.

It was a blazing hot day. Up above in the cloudless blue a brazen sun glared and burned, and not a breath stirred the full foliage of the oaks and ashes, not a whisper of air moved in the undergrowth. Once I came to a bush of sweetbriar, and the dew-begotten scent steamed round me as I passed it. A pair of rabbits bobbed off into the covert, and the white scutt of one of them paused over the scratched earth. I clapped my hands, and the burrow was brown and empty.

Soon I was at the head of the lake, crossed the little wooden bridge, and took my course up-stream. I chose the left bank, for the other was impassable in places; they could not have gone that way. The May-flies, that happy, light-winged crowd of ephemerals, were dead and done with by now: just here, earlier in the year, gray drake and green drake were balancing five on a flower, and the fat spotted trout were filling their bellies with quiet, sucking gulps at them as they caught in the water-way; but now the meadow-sweet and willow-herb sparkled with tiny restless dragon-flies, needles of sapphire and emerald, poised and counterpoised to each other in a gay cotillon of courtship. Here and there a water-rat fell plump in the dark water,—a diamond bubble to mark his track—rose softly, brushed silver water from his back against silver reeds, and plumped in the pool again,—you could see the dints of his little feet in the mud. Water-hens paddled nervously in and out of the rushes, and a pair of dab-

chicks played hide-and-seek in the weeds,—plenty of havoc they had made with the trout-spawn, I knew. Once a kingfisher darted up stream, just a flash of shot turquoise. And over all the sun shone, brazen, parching, restless.

I dare say I had walked close on a mile, when something white on the bank caught my eye; it was a litter of shavings,—some one had cut a withy. A little further were more shavings, and the willows had been partly pollarded. And then I turned a corner and coming on a strange picture, leaned behind a tree-stem to take it in.

A small clearing in the undergrowth left a green patch of grass running down to the sedge of the stream's bank. At the back of this three hazel-clumps, their upper branches arched over and tied to make a roof, were fenced round with intertwined withies and bracken, hardly leaving an air-hole. In the recess of this harbour were two neatly folded rugs, and two bows, trimly pared, also of bent hazel, stood with a bundle of black-feathered arrows against the side. These arrows were tipped with twisted strips of lead, and the hackles were fastened with thin string. A very small dead rabbit, pierced through and through with one of the arrows, hung over a cross-branch, legs together, the feathers on the notched end of the wood dragged and disarranged. The remnants of a wood-fire spread in a little grey pile on the edge of the water, the herbage having been cut short for a yard on either side. The skin of another very small rabbit was stretched on the bark of a large oak in the background. At the entrance of the harbour were strewn two heaps of clothes.

In the centre of a flattened circle of grass lay the Problem, his head on his elbows, staring lazily at the water. A

few yards up stream a huge willow bent over the pool, and on the horizontal stem of it stood the Sinner, balancing himself by a branch, the sun on him full and warm and the water below dark and cool. The moss of the bank had deadened my footsteps, and neither of them had seen me.

Presently the Sinner let go his branch, poised himself, took the prettiest header into the pool, swam slowly to the bank and clambered out gleaming. He stood for a minute on the edge, glanced round, and caught sight of me. "Oh, have you really come? Are you going to stay with us?"

I stepped into the clearing and the Problem sat up and regarded me. The grass-bents marked him in a quaint criss-cross pattern. "Where are your towels?" I asked.

The Sinner looked round with a meditative air. "I believe,—we've only got a handkerchief," he said.

The Problem also considered matters. "You didn't bring yours, you know," said he; "so there's only one, in my pocket."

"Get it," said I. It was extracted, and proved to be of minute dimensions with a spotted border. The pair of them stood watching me.

"I'm very nearly dry," began the Problem apologetically.

I surveyed him. "You may put on your clothes."

The Sinner looked rather taken aback. "Shall I dress too?" he asked. I gave him the handkerchief and—to what strange uses!—the roll of lint from my pocket.

He looked at me uncertainly. "Are you angry with us?" he asked in a subdued voice.

"I shall not speak to either of you until you are dressed; then I shall have something to say to you." I spoke very severely, and the Sinner, retreating in the direction of his

clothes, began smoothing and rolling up the soaked lint.

"Put that down," I said, "and dress." He dropped it with a start, and began to dress hurriedly, getting into his garments the wrong way round, and out again with an apprehensive look at me. The Problem clothed himself methodically and silently with an air of abstraction. I sat down with my back against a pollard.

Presently the Sinner, halfway through his task, paused, hesitated a moment, and came quickly across to me. "Oh, don't be angry, please don't. We didn't think—"

"Be quiet," I said sternly, and he returned to the difficulties of his collar. I bethought me of my pipe, and lit it; feeling that I wanted something to occupy me, much as your actor has to learn what to do with his hands. When the blue smoke was lifting kindly, I looked up. The Problem had finished dressing and was picking burrs off the Sinner's coat; except that his face had a little more colour he seemed much as usual. The Sinner,—well, the Sinner was very quietly but very unmistakably weeping. I fell to examining a dead leaf with interest. A stifled sob made me glance at the boys again, and I saw that the spotted handkerchief (dripping) was being used for normal purposes. Matters became too much for me. "Come here, both of you," I said, and blew smoke into the sun slowly and judiciously. The Sinner choked manfully and dropped the handkerchief. They stood before me, and I surveyed them with calmness, I hope. "Now, what have you to say for yourselves?"

There was silence. The Problem shifted uneasily from one leg to the other. Then the Sinner said, with odd little jerks between the words: "We did not think *you* would be

angry. We thought you would understand. We meant—meant—” But what he meant became more than he could manage to tell me just then, and I had recourse to my pipe again.

When he was quiet I spoke. I found that it was best, while speaking, to gaze steadfastly at a fixed point in the landscape. A rook on a far elm suited me admirably. “Before I speak to you of the anxiety your absence has caused,”—(the rook flapped and was off—I rose)—“I should like to ask you a few questions.” This method of procedure appeared to me desirable in two respects; it mystified the Sinner and the Problem, and allowed me to walk about while making inquiries. I could not have kept my countenance long with those two wide-eyed, sorrowful ragamuffins standing dumb before me. I went to the arbour. “How did you make this?” I asked.

“We cut some willow-branches—”

“Exactly; you cut some willow-branches. Now, to whom do those willow-branches belong?” There was no answer. “You see what I mean? It is other people’s property.”

“They’re very little ones,” suggested the Sinner. “She said—”

“Do not tell me what she said. Did you obtain permission?” Again there was no answer. “This is a very little one, too,” I said, indicating the suspended rabbit. “Which of you killed it?”

The Sinner brightened visibly. “I got them both,” he began quickly. “They—”

I was examining the arrow. “You have poked this through further than it went at first, have you not?”

The Sinner nodded. “He thought it looked better,” explained the Problem. “Besides, it wasn’t,—it wouldn’t die, you see.”

“It came hopping out,” went on the Sinner; “it and the other.”

“Was it far off?”

“No, not very far; at least, about two yards. I was afraid it would run away, and it didn’t seem to be looking, you see, so I shot it.”

“And the other?”

The Sinner regarded me doubtfully; I was speaking with great sternness. “Well, the other, you see, was washing its face. It licked its paws and then rubbed them on its nose; and I had one shot at it, but it missed, and so it stopped, and then it sat up again and went on washing itself. So I hit it in the chest.”

“Was this one far off?”

“It,—it was about three yards off, farther than the other. The Problem said I ought to have taken it unawares, but I should think I did, because it didn’t seem to know I was going to shoot it.”

“Where is it now? I mean, this is the skin; where is the rest?”

The Sinner looked rapidly about him. Then he darted to a big dock-plant, and took something from behind it. “Here’s its head,” he said; “we cut it off. You don’t,—do you want to see the inside?” he asked respectfully, glancing at the dock-plant.

“The legs,” said I hastily, “the legs, where are they?”

“Well, we,—we ate some, you see for supper. We roasted it by the fire; it wasn’t very nice,” he added thoughtfully. “The cook at my Aunt’s—”

“I do not wish to hear about the cook at your Aunt’s. What else did you have?”

“Bread,” said the Sinner promptly; “we got a loaf from the baker when he came yesterday.”

“Did you pay for it?”

“No; we just asked him for it and he gave it us.”

“Sinner,” said I, “you are wonderful. That is to say, your conduct—” But I had made a slip, and he saw that in a twinkling.

"Oh, don't be angry any more," he said appealingly. "We didn't mean—"

"Look here," I said. "Here are you two boys; you ask to come with me for a walk to find a hawk's nest, and then after keeping me waiting half-an-hour you don't come; you have gone off somewhere else. You frighten everybody at the school till they are at their wits' end; you keep me sitting up for you all night, and looking for you from three o'clock in the morning. I haven't been to bed, and I don't suppose that any of your masters have slept a wink all night. One of them went off early this morning to Axham to look for you. I walked myself to Overdon to ask about you: I drove six miles yesterday night to a gipsy-camp to see if you were there; and the police have been searching for you since seven o'clock last evening. The police," I repeated with emphasis.

The Sinner grew pale as I spoke. The Problem (I knew it even then) saw through me; still, he listened with attention.

"But I wrote you a letter," began the Sinner.

"Why did you not tell me straight out?"

There was no answer. "He only thought of it before dinner," put in the Problem; "and after dinner you weren't in your room, so we left a note in the book."

"H'm; but—I don't know, it seems to me incomprehensible. How long did you mean to stay here? What did you think would be the end of it all? What were you to eat?" The Sinner glanced at the rabbits. "And what if it rained? And—by the way, do you know what the time is?" They shook their heads. "Past one o'clock. Well," said I cheerfully, "I suppose you will be having lunch soon; so will I."

I retired to a mossy stump in the background, took out my sandwiches and spread them invitingly; then I pulled out my flask, measured a small portion of spirit, filled that up at the pool and returned to my stump. The two boys watched me in silence. I began on a sandwich, taking no notice of them. They watched me for a little while, and then the Sinner nudged the Problem and turned to the stream. He stood with his back to me and looked hard at the distance. "Come," said I, and he faced me very quickly. "I've brought my lunch, you see. I thought it would save you trouble. Don't mind about me, go on with yours; but perhaps you've had it already?" The Sinner shook his head. "Well, there's that rabbit, you know; you had better make a fire and cook it."

The Sinner glanced at the tiny heap of ashes, and then at me, and then at the rabbit.

"There's plenty of wood," said I; "or do you want a match? Ask me for anything you want."

The Sinner touched the Problem's arm, and set off manfully to gather wood. He brought a bundle of bracken, which the Problem arranged, and then some sticks. Then came a pause, and I wondered how long I should hold out. "By the way, you two," I suggested, as if the idea had just occurred to me; "had you thought what a fine whacking you'll get, when you get back?"

The Sinner looked at me again, but only sadly. Then followed a search for a match; but there was only one, and it went out. I made no further pretence about matters.

"Confound it!" I shouted, and remembered to whom I was speaking. "Here, bother it all, you poor little nobodies, come and eat this,—all of it, and hurry!"

I expected a joyful surprise, and

the instant disappearance of my sandwiches, but I was mistaken. The Problem looked round eagerly, it is true, but the Sinner did not move. The Problem gazed at him with anxiety. Then he stepped forward quickly,—I believe the Sinner would have fallen; he was very white. Good heavens! thought I, and remembered the brandy. It was very lucky,—but just then the Sinner collapsed altogether, and for the next few minutes I was busy. When I look back on the fifteen seconds or so while the Sinner lay small and white on the grass before me, I believe they were the most miserable of my life. I did not know,—how could I have known?—how little bread had been left for breakfast; how early the boys had turned out of their arbour; how they had been in and out of the water nearly all the morning. But it was only fifteen seconds or so before the Sinner looked up at me, choking a little over the brandy; then his colour came back, and he regarded with interest a sandwich offered by the Problem, whose face was aglow with the liveliest affection and happiness. Indeed, he told me afterwards that he had never seen anyone faint before; he thought the Sinner had died very suddenly.

My proposal that we should return to the school was accepted in silence as inevitable. And in silence we returned, except that the Sinner remarked once that it was a cold wind. And mine host being occupied with the *oratio obliqua* and a blackboard, I took the pair of them to the matron, a raw-boned Scots-woman for whom I entertained the most respectful regard, and who, I learnt afterwards, had spied on me through the keyhole as I cut the sandwiches.

"It will be before sundown that

they will be back," she had remarked to the odd man of the place, who groaned under a basket of boots; and she watched my direction from the window as he went up-stairs creaking. When she did set eyes on us she had made up her mind, over I don't know how many pairs of stockings. "Do not talk to me about it," she said; "ye'll straight to bed, the pair of ye." And with an indignant glance at me she marched them up the passage; but it was she who sent me my luncheon by the boot-boy for all that.

CHAPTER IX.

THE next morning there came news that had sent a messenger post-haste to Overdon. I had been awakened more than once during the night by mysterious sounds of comings and goings in the passages outside my room, muttered orders, indistinct questions, scuttering feet; and twice I thought I heard the voice of mine host's good lady, urgent and agitated. But my tired brain took little heed of it all; indeed, I doubt if I made more out of it than to recognise a break in the sleep that lay heavy on me after that last night's vigil,—a pleasant invitation to lengthened slumbers; and I awoke finally from a dream in which I had taken refuge in the cellar from the Publican, who was battering at the door of it with a mahl-stick.

Some one was tapping at the door; and it was not long before I understood, from the biting Scots of my friend the matron, that the Sinner was ill,—in a raging fever—and latterly had been asking for me (though it seemed he knew no one) with such miserable persistency that the doctor had given orders I should be summoned. It was a short toilet

I made, and I learned later that mine hostess supposed I had been dressed already when the message reached me. I was taken by my guide down a passage to a small room disconnected from the boys' dormitories; the sick-room was the name given to it, as I was told on the way.

The door was ajar. Mine hostess stood by it, her face betraying a motherly concern. She pointed to the smallest of beds in the corner of the room beneath a bay-window; it seemed they had moved the Sinner to this on his showing signs of feverishness late in the afternoon. The doctor stood in the window, a thermometer or some such instrument poised in his fingers. I went to the side of the bed. The Sinner lay there, his face flushed and his eyes closed, the abandoned attitude of a child's suffering. He was not asleep, as I could tell by his breathing.

"Sinner," said I.

But the Sinner took no notice. He stirred uneasily, and in doing so his hand touched mine for a moment. I know nothing of fevers, nor much of any illness beyond my own of three months back, and I had made neither head nor tail of that; but the burning heat of the child's hand astonished me, and I looked questioningly at the doctor. He nodded, and tapped his thermometer. From his low-voiced conversation with mine hostess it appeared that he thought a crisis of some kind likely in the course of the next twenty-four hours; what might happen he could scarcely tell; the fever might leave him, but in these cases, as a rule,—prolonged exposure,—heavy dews,—developments, complications,—impossible to say—hoped for the best—good constitution—bah! I declare I had heard the identical words, a dozen times, all of them.

"We have sent for his aunt,"

explained mine hostess. "He is an orphan, as I dare say you know. She is a strong-minded, unsympathetic woman, but perhaps really fond of the child. She will be here, if she comes (which is doubtful) by twelve o'clock."

"I shall look in later," put in the doctor. "Meanwhile,—nothing much to be done,—cooling drinks,—some one he knows to sit with him." Mine hostess glanced at me. I knew how busy her mornings must be, and nodded; though I needed no consideration of that kind to induce me to stay. Perhaps it was an accident of my lonely, selfish existence, but in some way the fact that the child had all along sought my company unasked,—nay, had come to look upon the companionship as a kind of right—had wrought a curious change in my attitude to the world in general; and between the Sinner and the Problem and myself particularly there existed that unreasoning bond of sympathy which has its basis not in common pursuits and interests, but is born of a confidence impossible of analysis: the trust, the faith—no, but it is the creed of dumb animals and children.

From mine hostess came a grateful look and murmured thanks. She drew me a chair to the bed-head and the doctor followed her to the door. I was left with the matron, whose face wore a forbidding look of disfavour—indeed, I was in doubt how to deal with her. She looked me up and down, and I bore the scrutiny with what grace I might.

"Ye'll not have had much experience with the sick, I'm thinking," said she with a preliminary sniff.

I answered that I had been under doctors' care myself.

"That I do not doubt," she observed. "With your fondness for sitting in the damp places and like,

ye will have caught your colds before now."

She eased the pillow at the Sinner's head and lifted his arm for a moment. In her big bony hand the Sinner's sunburned wrist looked absurdly small and weak. "Ye'll be knowing nothing of the nursing of a child, of course," she said. "Aweel, there's nothing much here. The doctor—eh, but doctors are fules."

I asked her opinion of the case with the deference she evidently expected; but she was not explicit. "Ye will set at the bedside and ye will give him his drink; and ye will see that he does not throw the clothes from him; and if he speaks to ye, ye will know that it is deleerious and as nature means him. There will be nothing in that."

I inquired if the bell communicated with her room.

"I am no more than across the passage," she said. "Ye will ring if ye choose, but it will be no great trouble to ye to step to my room. No but what I should hear ye move."

She busied herself with smoothing the sheets on the bed as she spoke. The Sinner seemed quite unconscious of her presence, and though he opened his eyes now and then, only closed them without apparent recognition of anything that was passing. She smoothed the hair gently from his forehead. "Eh, but 'tis hot," she said to herself. I caught sight of the wedding-ring on her finger. "Puir wee soul," she whispered. Her masterful and comprehensive gaze went round the room, and she shifted the barley-water a little nearer to me. "Ye will mind that it is a preevi-lege," she remarked abruptly.

I assured her that I was grateful to be allowed to do so much.

"Aweel, the child has been speirin' for ye," she said; and just then the Sinner started up with my name on

his lips. I spoke to him, and he looked at me vacantly and lay down again. I settled the clothes about him, the matron regarding me sternly as I did so.

"Have ye had breakfast?" she asked with some fierceness. Truth to tell I had forgotten it. She surveyed the bed critically, tucked in the blankets at the sides, and rearranged the barley-water. "Ye will sit in the chair," she said; and she turned with her hand on the door to take a final and jealous scrutiny of the room. She gave some kind of a snort,—of pleasure or toleration I could not tell—and disappeared. It was not five minutes gone before she returned with a tray containing the breakfast of a giant. She set it on a table in the window and I thanked her; but she opened the door again, shut it behind her without a word, stepped across to her own room, and returned within the minute to contemplate me with the utmost severity. "And if I did not know ye would be guid to the child I ye would have seen ye to that London of yours before I would have let ye look at the keyhole of the door of this room," she said, and was gone so silently that I never heard the catch of the lock.

Thus it was that I gained my first experience of a sick-room without a doctor's bill to follow. And after all it was no great matter, though I made sure of the use of my bell before I was in any sense at ease; that is speaking comparatively, for I cannot say I was ever at ease during the three hours I spent there. I think I had never before seen a child suffer; and the only associations I connected with the Sinner were those of skies and flowers and outdoor growth and activity; an innocent faun in my new-found Arcadia; the apotheosis of mischief in a garden of primroses.

For quite an hour the Sinner lay there tossing uneasily. Now and then he started, stared wildly round the room, and fell back again always without any kind of recognition of my presence. I had some trouble to keep the clothes on him, and that I knew I must do after the caution given me by the Scotswoman, or I think I should have left him as he seemed to wish, and you could see the whole of him longed for the coolness of the air. Yet there was no resistance to any measures I took to obey the Scotswoman's injunctions; you would not realise, until you sat as I did by the bedside, how small a thing a child is.

And then he began to chatter. One cannot suppose anything more startling to a man untrained as myself than these sudden breakages of silence,—the causeless inception of speaking after unnatural stillnesses—and above all, the mechanism of it; there was a machine, and twice in a minute the piston thrust and the wheels ran and there was speech. It was not the Sinner, though he spoke of nothing but the trivialities of the small life he lived; arithmetic and school-bells and cricket-balls, from one to the other and over again; and sometimes of my pictures and me, but that was the saddest of all, for each time I was hoping the words had their meaning, and each time he reverted to something quite outside my relations with him,—Latin sentences, always Latin sentences, subject and object and predicate and all the unmannerly jargon of schoolbook grammar. And twice at least there were words indicative of the more serious interviews with mine host,—a sort of comment unspoken till now—and yet I knew the Sinner thought lightly of such matters; but they were part of his daily life, and so I think found their utterance then. I

am sure I should have laughed at the word *Don't* at any other time; just then, in that connection, I wondered what it had cost him before to suppress it; not much I dare say, but in that little bed he did not look worth whipping.

Perhaps it was more than could be expected of any man in my position that I should take all this as a matter of course; "as nature means him," that was the matron's expression of it. Indeed, I doubt if it was proposed I should. There was the removal of my breakfast, which broke the spell for a minute or more; and twice or three times I thought I heard a rustle and the fall of a foot and guessed the Scots mother at the keyhole. However that may be, the Sinner was on the point of revealing some mystery connected with one of mine host's last interviews with him (and I was on the tip-toe of expectation, a glass of barley-water in my hand, and I do not know with what other intentions of making matters easy) when there came to me the distant sound of voices, nearer and nearer, up the stair and along the passage, till they ceased at the door of the room.

"You see, sir—" said the Sinner, and his voice was hopeless of reprieve.

Then the door opened softly.

If the Problem had set himself of designed purpose, that first afternoon when I met the Lady of the Lake, to draw me a picture of the Sinner's Aunt as I was to meet her then, he could not have outlined her with an exacter touch. There were the goloshes, the umbrella, the cotton gloves, the spectacles like carriage-lamps on each side of a red-tipped pole of a nose, the wisp of hair under a black bonnet, the thin figure, and the rasping voice. I declare I had known her for years.

She was accompanied by mine

hostess, a grave and matronly person. I rose from my seat at the bedside as she entered, and found my right hand encumbered with a glass of barley-water, which I was not far off spilling. I was conscious of a prolonged glare from the black-rimmed spectacles. I remember speculating on the possibility of black kid being bound so neatly on the nose-rest,—if that be a correct term, and I am ignorant if it is. Mine hostess introduced me, and the Sinner's Aunt bowed, a sort of snap out of the perpendicular and back again.

"Let me see the child," she said. I made way for her to the bedside, and as I did so, I caught sight of the matron's face behind her; the mouth was thin and forbidding.

The Sinner's Aunt surveyed the fevered little face with severity. She handed me her goloshes and umbrella and bent over the bed. "What did you tell me that doctor said?" she asked abruptly. Mine hostess in her reply happened to mention the word crisis.

"Crisis?" she rapped out in a strident undertone, and sniffed. "Crisis? A cold, nothing more nor less. From the telegram I received this morning I thought the boy was—"

"And ye will be so kind as to remember that this is a sick-room," quoth the matron.

The Aunt turned upon her, looked her up and down, and snorted. The Sinner tossed fretfully and thrust a hot little foot from under the blankets. The Aunt replaced the clothes somewhat more gently than I expected. Then he chattered out something about buttercups and the river, and whatever answer the matron would have been given for her interruption was forgotten.

"H'm," said the Sinner's Aunt.

"Ye will see that it is more than a

cold," said the matron; "and perhaps it would be better that not so many should stand round the child's bed," she added to mine hostess. "There will be the room yonder, and it is no more than to step the passage."

I suggested this to the Sinner's Aunt. Contrary to my expectation she at once took her goloshes and umbrella, and with a parting glare at the matron made for the door with such speed that my intentions of opening it for her were belated by half the length of the room; before I could do so much as make my way past the little table containing the barley-water she had turned the handle, opened the door, and to my bewildered vision appeared to fall headlong into the passage. There was a resounding thump and a muffled cry, and leaving the matron in a state of speechless rage and indignation I darted to the door followed by mine hostess, the latter almost tearful in her perplexity. It was a strange sight that met our eyes.

The Problem was sitting on the floor rubbing his head dismally. Beyond him a confused heap,—I am unable to describe it with particulars—which, as the key turned behind us in the sick-room door, shook itself convulsively, came to a kneeling posture and at last rose with frantic sweeps at dress and hair and bonnet,—the Sinner's Aunt, voiceless, panting.

She waved me aside and leaned against the wall. Mine hostess opened the door of the matron's room, and she allowed herself to be assisted in. I picked up the Problem and followed them.

"Take him away!" gasped the Aunt. "Take that boy away! Do you hear me? Take him away!"

"He is hurt, I think," I said; and indeed the Problem gazed most mournfully at me.

"What could have happened?" asked mine hostess, busy with a smelling-bottle and a fan.

"Happened? The boy deliberately thrust his body before me as I was leaving the room, deliberately threw me to the ground. Take him away!"

"I didn't," murmured the Problem.

"Deliberately threw me to the ground. Take him away!" She was recovering her breath a little. "What were you doing at the door?" she asked severely.

"I was listening, listening at the keyhole."

"Listening at the keyhole! I tell you, take him away!"

"Yes," said the Problem, "I wanted to know how he was."

"A likely story," she sniffed.

"The boys were great friends," I interposed. "This is the one who was so foolish as to run away with your nephew, and he is naturally anxious—"

"Anxious, indeed, he anxious! And is no one else to be anxious, I should like to know? For a great boy like that to be lumbering round a keyhole—"

"At least," I suggested, "he has not benefited greatly by doing so." There was a sorry lump on the boy's forehead, as I turned his head for her inspection.

"H'm," said the Sinner's Aunt, "butter. Take him away."

I beckoned to him to follow me. In truth I thought I saw an opportunity of doing something which had been in my mind all the morning, and that was to send a note to the Lady of the Lake acquainting her of the way in which matters had fallen out. She would come, I knew, and the thought of it made me for a moment forgetful of the reason. The Problem assented with alacrity; he was just out of school, and could be back before dinner. So I set him off

to the lake and returned to mine hostess in the matron's room. I found the Sinner's Aunt in a somewhat more composed frame of mind. She enquired when the doctor would be returning. In about a couple of hours, thought mine hostess, and went on to explain that lunch had been prepared and was waiting. I was invited to accompany them, and on the way managed to slip behind and knock at the bedroom door.

"Is yon body wi' ye?" asked the matron with caution through the crack. "Weel then, ye will tell the mistress there is no deference in the child's condection. No that to any who has had experience it would be expectit. Ye can judge for yersel'," she added, opening the door a thought wider, and I peered in. The Sinner's eyes were not shut, but I do not know what he was seeing. And still he chattered of rabbits and algebra and bows and arrows, and I left him, asking permission (it was politic) to return later.

I have little remembrance of what passed at luncheon. The Sinner's Aunt I recollect contemplating the rice-pudding with acrimony and eventually being helped twice to it; but beyond that, and noticing that she guarded her goloshes under her chair, I think I might have eaten that meal alone. The windows were wide open, and in the sunshine outside a pair of peacocks strutted proud in shot bronze and blue; clusters of wistaria swayed in the breeze, and there was a merry chase of sparrows after a white butterfly—a flash of forked wings and a swallow had it; you could hear the snap as he shut his beak. And then the gate swung and a gracious figure came into the framed square of garden. And the Lady of the Lake, my note in her hand, and her eyes grave and kind, crossed the lawn with the peacocks stepping daintily after her.

I think the Sinner's Aunt was glad to see her. But her first action was to gather her umbrella and goloshes, and she stood to shake hands with a yoke of flabby blackness on her left wrist. They were but the merest commonplaces my Lady exchanged with myself; she thanked me for the note I sent her, and perhaps not five minutes were passed before she was away with mine hostess and the Aunt to the sick-room. I followed.

At the door we found the doctor.

"Difficult to know what to make of it," quoth he. I know the matron behind him sniffed. Mine hostess engaged him in a muttered conversation, of which the result was this; that the Sinner's Aunt accompanied her to the drawing-room, the doctor nodded to the matron and was off, and the Lady of the Lake turned to me—not a thought of laughter in lips or eyes. "I am going to sit with him," she said. "If anything should happen,—you understand—I will send for you at once."

I may have replied as I ought, but it was a different ending to my note from that I had pictured. You see I had hoped for so much; and I changed my views about it all before I was down-stairs, and found that I was saying *too much* over and over. My pipe, thought I, and work,—which led only to my pipe.

It was a cloudy day, and no need for the peacocks to foretell rain. Rain was in the air, a lull of singing birds, and a darkening of green on the trees. And there was silence in the garden; hardly a sound but of bumble-bees at the mignonette and roses, and those nodding in a fluctuant warm wind against a sky of grey and purple.

A verandah ran outside mine host's smoking-room. Further along the house-wall I could hear the drone of his class humming through the open windows. I sat in the verandah in

a painted garden-chair, possibly for an hour, while the smoke from my pipe curled among the wistaria stems, lifted to the roofing, nestled to the twisted iron, lapped under the eaves and away. There was not a puff of wind; the stupor of that still garden overtook me, and I sat watching the shifting smoke-wreaths, whitened from grey because of the drab clouds that writhed and grew beyond the hill, sharp edges and reeling globes of vapour. It was hypnotism of a kind, for the live faculties in me were bruised and deadened; the crash must come, you felt that, and till then there was nothing to do but to wait. But it fitted the time; sunshine and flowers and birds and bees, six weeks of them, and leading up to this; cloud and silence, the tension of my string of adventures tightened to breaking point, the storm to come,—and after that?

The dull air split with light; a knife of light that probed once, twice, and then an oppression of darkness on pained eyeballs. There was a scared cheeping in the ivy, and again silence. Then a crackle, miles beyond the hill, that grew to a roar, rolled and crashed overhead and mumbled sulkily, loth to leave its hold on our hearing. That suited my mood. I longed for the snap of the string, the relief of the strained fibres; I welcomed each stroke of the knife, keen, white, resistless. There were shock and crash that followed, but sound after silence was the event we were moving to: another flash, and another; a circular sweep of the blade, nearer volleys, artillery galloping into line, a stifling atmosphere that bound brain and sight and thought.

Some one touched me on the shoulder. It may be I guessed more than the Scotswoman meant to tell me, but as I followed her I knew there

was not long to wait. The doctor? If he were not here by now, no need of him.

The room was altered. In the morning there had been light, air, a patch of blue beyond white-sashed windows, the happy chirping of restless sparrows, and the Sinner talking only as he might talk in his sleep. But now I saw a lurid square of sky, a darkened room, my Lady of the Lake at the Sinner's bedside, and mine hostess and the Sinner's Aunt in the corner behind her. And there was the Sinner bolt upright and staring straight before him: chatter, chatter, a gesture of the hand, a shake of the head; the lightning playing round and round him, cutting queer shadows on the wall; a question and a strained pause for the answer he never heeded, the voice of my Lady of the Lake, soothing and caressing; the furious blows of thunder that drowned speech and mocked the intense longing to hear that possessed me.

The blind, thought I, the blind, and shut it out. It was a red one, and half way down before the Scots-woman could stop me. "Up wi' it," she gestured more than spoke in the din. "We drew it before, and it sent him daft." Lightning through a red blind!

I have never seen a picture such as that. There was a flash that whipped the darkness, flicking a white thong into every corner; a simultaneous rending above us,—it was a yell, a scream, a shout; the lightning licked at the Sinner's mouth and eyes like the tongue of a snake. His lips were moving, but there came no sound from them. He pointed straight beyond us all, and the black shadow leaped up on the wall, a hand denunciatory, threatening, the hand of a prophet cursing a city. The strangest thoughts ran riot in me; I could formulate no idea but built its theme on the

shadow; Jonah and Nineveh, Elijah and Baal—and then a repetition of words, the same again and again.

"Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain—prayed earnestly that it might not rain—prayed earnestly—"

The Lady of the Lake was kneeling at the bed-side. There was a lull in the storm and the room grew darker.

"And he prayed again, and the heavens sent rain—he prayed again—"

The Sinner had stopped chattering and was lying back on the pillows. There was a moment of intensest silence. The room was so dark that it was only by leaning forward I could see that his eyes were open. His breathing was faint and short.

A splash on the window-pane,—another and another,—half-a-dozen. And then came the rain: sheets and sheets of rain; rain that hissed and raced over the tiles, choked the gutters, danced away down to the gravel path to make a little sea there, slashed and tore at the sea till it was the colour of tan, scattered the rose-leaves, spilled the mould of the beds a yard away, and poured in a yellow waterfall down the stone steps to the lawn beyond.

The Lady of the Lake rose and bent over the Sinner. One of his hands lay palm-upward on the counterpane; it was wet and glistening. The Scots-woman took the wrist, held it a moment, and nodded. I think we were all watching her. "Ye may leave him now," she said to the Sinner's Aunt. The tension had broken with that heavy splash of rain upon the window. The Sinner was fast asleep.

CHAPTER X.

I WAS told the next morning that the Sinner slept through the night as

we left him. He was not awake at eight, so much I learned from the Problem, an early riser; but later in the day I made inquiries at the matron's door and the big Scotswoman eyed me kindly.

"Aweel, ye will not do more than look in at the door," she said. "No that the child is in his fever now," she added, "but [with a prodigious sniff] 'tis doctor's orders."

I opened the door softly. My sakes, but here was matter for thought! The Sinner's Aunt at the bedside, and she was reading,—I guessed Bunyan—it was *THE FAIRCHILD FAMILY*.

The Sinner turned quickly, and the Aunt's book closed with a snap.

"Oh," said the Sinner, "why ever didn't you come before?"

"One can't be running everywhere after,—good-morning," said I parenthetically to the Gorgon—"after a small boy who—"

"Oh, but we didn't mean—I didn't mean—"

"Who does all sorts of extraordinary things, and then expects—have you been here long?" I asked. The Gorgon had risen and was facing me with a severity impossible to disregard. "Long enough for my liking," was the answer, "and I understood that the doctor had given orders—"

"You see I've had a cold," said the Sinner. "I mayn't read. Will you come and read to me?" *THE FAIRCHILD FAMILY* was placed on the table with a subdued bang.

"I've only come for a minute, Sinner. I think I mustn't stop to read. And besides, your Aunt—you see—"

"Yes," said the Sinner.

"Perhaps I shall see you later," I remarked to the Sinner's Aunt. She took not the smallest notice.

I closed the door, and, a sudden idea striking me, made my way to the

school-library, a sunny panelled room on the ground-floor. I took up the catalogue, and searched under *F*; *THE FAIRCHILD FAMILY* was not there, which set me thinking.

But I had a further object in leaving the Sinner abruptly. I knew that the Lady of the Lake had left on the evening before with the intention of coming up from the house in the valley early the next day, and I thought I knew the way she would come. So I betook myself to the verandah and my pipe, and that was pleasing me mightily. My pipe has ever been my truest friend, though you may lose sight of your truest friend for a day or two; but there are times when through the soft grey smoke-wreaths the world takes colour like a flower in the sun, crimson and purple for duns and drabs; and here was a time when the storm of yesterday was over and you looked straight ahead into clean skies and clear weather. I suppose I lost myself in the contemplation of it; for yesterday, as we were leaving the Sinner asleep in that quaint little room, with the lightning dying in the west and the rain helter-skelter at the window, I caught a glance from the Lady of the Lake, and if she read a twentieth part of what I was thinking she must either have been angry or not. At any rate she was to return this morning, and through my pipe-clouds the world went alive and rosy. Understand, I was sitting with my back to an open French window. There was a tap on my shoulder. I must have turned with more than mere politeness.

"No, I know you didn't expect me," remarked the Sinner's Aunt.

"I beg your pardon," said I, and immediately saw there was no reason why I should have done so, "I thought you were with the—with your nephew."

"I have been with him since three o'clock," said the Aunt.

"You must be tired," I ventured.

"I am not," replied the Aunt.

"Won't you sit down?" I asked, hoping she would not.

"No," said the Aunt with emphasis. Her voice rose. "No. Why should I sit down? Can you tell me that?"

"I am sure I cannot," I replied.

"Then why did you ask me?" she snapped. "But there, you're like the rest of them. They're all alike. When I came here yesterday, what did I do? Sat in a train for three hours, except when I walked up and down the carriage. I get out of the train and sit in a brougham for half-an-hour. I am met at the door of the house and asked to sit down. I sit in that room at the child's bedside for six hours, come down-stairs and am asked—to sit down. Well, it's about all some people are fit for, to sit down themselves or to ask some one else to do it." She regarded my deck-chair with meaning.

"I am very sorry," I observed.

"You are not," she rapped out.

"Well then, to tell the truth, I am not," I answered, "not in the least." I was half-angry, half-laughing. Perhaps she was unused to be met with her own weapons; at any rate a grim smile deepened the lines about her mouth.

"If every man and woman told the truth under all circumstances," said she, "the world would be a very different place."

"It would be very dull," I suggested.

"Dull? It would be about as lively a place as I wish to see. Dull, indeed!"

"Of course. You would never be able to wonder whether your neighbour was saying more than she meant; or whether she would think you meant more than you said."

"H'm," said the Sinner's Aunt. "Well, it's not likely to be tried, that's one thing."

"It might be tried, for five minutes at a time; a sort of game, you know."

"H'm. Why are you sitting here?"

"To smoke, and to think, and to look at the view."

"Bah!" said the Aunt.

"Does that mean the experiment is to be regarded as a failure?"

"Not at all. It would have been a failure, young man, if you had told the truth. As it is, I'll trouble you to accompany me round the garden." There followed business with the goloshes.

"I shall be delighted," said I.

"That is not true either," said the Sinner's Aunt.

It occurred to me to relight my pipe. "You don't object to smoking?" I asked, and was certain I could not have said that ten minutes ago.

"I shall be delighted," said the Sinner's Aunt. There was a convincing snap of elastic bands.

"I believe that is true," said I. But I believe too that my own profession of pleasure in the Gorgon's company was not conventional, for I was beginning to be more than interested in the owner of this rasping tongue and these goloshes. I doubt if I was not a little flattered that she had insisted on my being rude to her.

We set off up the path in silence, the Sinner's Aunt leading the way. At intervals she stopped and prodded a rose-leaf, or tapped at the stem of a clematis, or whisked aside straggling sweet-peas. The storm had left havoc behind it, and though the red gravel of the paths was swept clean and uneven, and the mould of the garden-beds, parched to cracks last week, was dinted and kneaded into a rich level of blackish brown, and though the grass steamed in the meadow beyond, and on all sides was that intoxicating

smell of earth after rain, still there was a sigh here and there for battered roses, snapped poppy-heads, dragged jessamine; or you stooped for a pansy, and found it splashed and spattered, and your geraniums sodden. But my sighs! Well I had hoped to have spent part of that morning with the Lady of the Lake, and matters were not setting fair in that direction, I had been thinking.

"Why does that child like you?" she asked.

I suppose I had expected, if I was thinking about the Sinner's Aunt at all, some commonplace in regard to battered geraniums. "Your nephew?" I asked back.

"Of course. Why is it?"

"But children like anybody."

"They do not," quoth the Sinner's Aunt, and there was nothing more to be said.

We had reached the end of the path, where it led away to the cricket-field and the laurel-walk. Thither went the Aunt, and I at her side, my dreams for the morning fled back to the ivory gate, for the laurel-walk was hidden, and invisible from that side of the house by which the Lady of the Lake must reach it.

"When that boy's mother was dying," said the Sinner's Aunt, "she asked me to take care of him."

"She was your sister?" I asked, for there was silence.

"Of course she was," she snapped.

"Who else should she have been?"

"She might have married your brother—"

"She didn't," said the Aunt. "I never had a brother."

"Oh," said I.

"She asked me to educate him," continued the Aunt. "Humph."

"And you said you would?"

"I did not," said the Aunt. "I said I would not." I could think of no answer to that. "And then I

did," said the Aunt, and banged a wet laurel-leaf with her umbrella, so that the heavy drops fell with a rattle.

We walked on rather faster, till she stopped abruptly. "That child is the image of his father," she said, and went on still faster.

"You knew his father well?" I questioned after a little, for want of something better worth asking.

The Sinner's Aunt made no answer to this. "I told his mother I should never do it," she said.

"But you would have."

"I tell you I should not," she cried fiercely, and cut at the laurels again.

"Did his father die before he was born?"

"Of course he did." The Sinner's Aunt turned and glared at me. "Why am I telling you all this?" she asked.

"I don't know. Please don't tell me anything you would—"

"I shall," said the Aunt. "I told you just now that the child was the image of his father."

"Yes," said I.

"That's the reason." We had arrived at a place where there were no laurels, and the umbrella drilled little round holes in the moss. "You can understand that, I suppose?"

"I can," said I. And by a common impulse we turned back down the walk.

"I'm a fool of an old woman, I dare say. I dare say I've got my own notions about bringing children up as they ought to be. I dare say I've a good many ideas in common with Solomon."

"And I also," I interpolated.

She looked sharply at me. "I've done my best to bring that boy up as I thought he ought to be. I'm not talking of expense, I've got nothing to spend my money on; I'm not one

of those idiots who found homes for dogs, and cemeteries for cats, and that sort of nonsense. But I've done what I thought best." I said I had no doubt of it. "I taught him to read and write and cipher, read the Bible to him, taught him his prayers." The umbrella stirred gently in some ribbon-grass. "I taught him everything, trained him up, beat him." Here came a cut at an oak-twig. "And the end of it all is that the boy hates me,—hates me!"

"No, no," said I.

"I tell you he does. Do you think I can't tell? When a man is delirious, what does he talk about? People he thinks about, people he knows. Isn't that true?"

"It may be true sometimes."

"And it's the same with children, What did that boy talk about? Rabbits, and knives, and watches, and his cousin, and his schoolfellows, and you."

"But then, how about algebra and Euclid and Latin, and things he hated?"

"Yes, and never about me, never a word about me, not a single word. I didn't ask them, but do you think I didn't know?"

"Perhaps when you were out of the room—"

"Nonsense. Here,—you were in the room three hours with him, they tell me. Did he talk about me once?"

"I was only there three hours. Perhaps the matron—?"

"Bah!" said the Aunt.

"Of course, it's the middle of his school-time. He would naturally think about his everyday life, the things and people he had seen lately."

"Not in the least. When his father was delirious—bah! the boy never said a word about me, because he never thought about me."

A puff of wind shivered in the leaves above us, and a little shower

of water rained down. The Aunt took no notice. "I brought a book with me to read to him. Of course he thanked me—had to. Do you suppose he liked it?"

I said I had not a doubt about it.

"Not a doubt about it? No. There was none—that was why. What was the first thing he asked you when you came into the room this morning?"

"I don't remember."

"You do. You would not say you didn't if you did not. You know as well as I do that he asked you to read to him. Didn't he?"

"I believe he did."

"And how long do you suppose I had been reading to him? Two hours, off and on. I began as soon as he woke up—"

"Perhaps the book—"

"It was a most interesting book; it was the only book I ever had to read as a child. No," said the Sinner's Aunt, "he didn't like the book, because he didn't like me. He dislikes me, is afraid of me, hates me, thinks me a monster."

Through the trees I caught a glimpse of a white frock and a blue sash.

"Attend to me, if you please," said the Aunt. "That boy doesn't like me, but he likes other people; and they like him, don't they?"

I said that the Sinner was an object of affection to all he met.

"H'm. You think the boy is worth educating?"

"If my judgment is of any value—"

"It's not," said the Sinner's Aunt; "not when you are looking through the trees every minute—do you think I can't see? Just attend to me, if you please."

"I am all attention," said I.

"Listen to me. I've something to say to you, not about the boy. I've something else to say to you—about

the answer you gave me when I asked you why you were sitting in the verandah. Do you remember, young man?"

I acknowledged the fact.

"Well then, I'm going away this morning, and I've seen as much as it is necessary for me to see."

"And that is?"

"I have two cautions to give you, young man. One is,—that's a dangerous young woman."

"I beg your pardon?"

"And the other is,—you're not the first she's made a fool of."

I bowed, I think. We were standing at the end of the walk, in full view of the house.

"I'll not trouble you to accompany me any further," said the Aunt. "I am returning to the house." She held out her hand stiffly. I bent over it, feeling sorry that I had looked away at the white frock. "Bah!" said the Sinner's Aunt, and stepped majestic-

ally towards the house, her skirts held high and her white stockings showing quaintly. But she stopped after may be a dozen yards. "Come here," she said, turning.

I obeyed her.

"How many pictures do you sell in a year?"

I said that it depended upon the gullibility of the British Public.

"H'm," said the Aunt. "Paint me two, four, half-a-dozen."

"It would give me great pleasure if you—"

"Bosh!" said the Aunt. "Half-a-dozen, large ones."

I murmured something about the probable cost.

"Don't bother me with the cost. Send the bill into my lawyer. Don't send it to me; if you do I won't pay it."

I attempted to express my thanks.

"Bah!" said the Sinner's Aunt.

(To be continued.)

MY ART.

I HAVE been asked to give some opinion on various subjects relating to my art and more particularly on the question as to whether I should advise a young woman to dedicate herself to it. I will not believe that such a question is put to me with any doubt as to the dramatic art being most noble, and I should be sorry for any one so wanting in intelligence and culture as to entertain such a doubt. The philosophy of Descartes did indeed in its time renew the charge of Plato that among the arts, which were all wicked, save only music, the dramatic was essentially the most wicked. Louis the Fourteenth, troubled by those doctrines which appeared new among the disciples of Descartes and were worn out among Platonists, asked Bossuet whether a true Catholic could frequent the theatres with a quiet conscience. "There are grave doubts to the contrary, and many examples in favour of the theory," replied the great prelate. To the more recent accusation that it is an art of an inferior order, I should not even think of answering. Hence, with no further notice of this very unimportant criticism, I pass on to a thing which, though so well known, it is in these days essential to repeat: "For the production of art, before all else, the artist is needed." No art is more beneficent, more honourable than the dramatic if a young woman take to it for pure love of it and for no other reason. Next to the pulpit nothing is more productive of good than the stage, if it be understood as the Talmas, the

Modenas, the Siddonses, and other great actors have understood it. Other, quite other are the reasons for regret with regard to this art. Teachers are wanting, and, what is even worse, good sense.

Why should the vocation of a young woman be called in question if she possess the requisites for succeeding in this art? Ah, if the world would only see the foundations that Nature lays! But the foundations are not enough,—the young must also entrust themselves to a guide; good seed is not sufficient,—a good tiller is also needed. Certainly genius is a school in itself, but geniuses are not born every day, and fine intelligence may easily go astray if not properly directed. The best disposition may be spoiled by bad training. How many could I name who have been ruined by false teaching! It is no question of founding academies or schools of acting in which most part of the time the true teacher or, to say better, the teacher of the true is the very thing lacking; it is a question of not entrusting oneself to a false school. At one time there was so much declaiming on the stage; now there is an exaggeration in the opposite direction, and a colourless way of acting and of manifesting the feelings is held to be true.

I cannot say that I am an advocate for academies so far as dramatic art goes. How many examples have we not of the small need of these institutions for one who has an inborn vocation for the stage, and contains within himself the germs of dramatic art! If he is without these, no teach-

ing could instil them into him. Perhaps the little interest I have always felt in academies arises from my having seen many great actors become such without the least need of academic rules. I cite England as a first example of what I say. From the sixteenth century downwards have academies, or schools of declamation, ever existed in that country? And yet what a group of dramatic celebrities has she produced, exciting the emulation of other nations? The first great actors were inspired solely by the impressions they received from the genius of Shakespeare, and from his creations they drew their stage-models. By this school many celebrated artists, such as Garrick, Kean, and Mrs. Siddons were greatly inspired, and they have left not only true models but also rules for studying the interpretation of the characters they had in mind to embody.

Neither in Austria nor in Germany exists an academy on the artistic basis of the one in Paris; the only object of the German academies is to teach music in all its expressions. In Italy there have never been academies or schools of acting; nevertheless how many great actors have made my beautiful country famous even in remote times. Where there is real dramatic talent great actors are not the product of academies. Do not let it be supposed that I deny the benefit of a good training in elocution, and in the physical graces of deportment, movement, gesture (in expression and in reticence) which the stage demands. These are of great importance for they are the grammar of our dramatic utterances; and for lack of them many a young actor (may I say more especially among English and American ones?) are launched upon the stage but half equipped to meet the difficulties they have to encounter. In some cases, even a really fine actor

never rids himself of bad habits and tricks thus unconsciously acquired. In any case some of the precious years of youth on the stage must be lost for want of a directing hand in the preparatory period.

Whosoever resolves to devote himself to the dramatic art must set about it by studying characters of action rather than those purely of declamation. This should be the first aim of an actor who desires to raise himself to eminence. He must give the precedence to action rather than to oratory because the former requires greater talent than the latter. When the words expressed are in contrast with the condition of the mind he must make this understood to the public by the workings of his face and by the accent of his voice, until the discordance between the word and the truth becomes evident to the spectator. Diction is the actor's brush; without it he can give no colour to his acting.

Nature is varied; the physiognomy of every country differs from that of another as do its expressions, its manners, its institutions; or, allowing that all have feelings more or less uniform, this conformity varies exceedingly in its manifestations.

Dramatic teachings may be of general application as to æsthetics, but not as to dispositions and manifestations. Every nature has its own special character in expression, in intonation, and in movements; therefore it is impossible for one nation to serve as a basis for another in education for the stage. For instance, the character of the Latin race manifests itself by a vivacity remarkable in movement and expression, while in the Northern races, notable for their reserve of manner, the expression of feeling is entirely different.

Other fundamental rules are, the teaching of good carriage and attitudes, of correct diction, and of

gesticulation; the pupil must be taught to study the beautiful in his gestures, and to avoid the exaggeration and affectation which are often put on to excite the applause of the public. Among these rudimentary teachings, let the master never forget to instil into his pupil the necessity for a conscientious study of the human heart. Let him also never tire of repeating that the aforesaid rules cannot be general since all are not gifted with the same physical and intellectual qualities as their predecessors, and cannot consequently obtain the same results by the same means. By the inter-mixture of art with nature and of nature with art a perfect actor will be found.

Another important precept to be instilled into the pupil is, that the actor must not only occupy himself with a physiological study of his character, but must also make a special study of the epoch in which the action unfolds itself. This last study, together with that of exactness in the costumes of the parts I played, was always one of my great aims.

Verse may be excellently recited without monotony in the inflexions or unnecessary breaks of the voice. I allow that tragic personages should have a special dignity of recitation, but this dignity must always be kept within the limits of naturalness. Modena, the reformer of our dramatic art, thus understood the recitation of tragedy, as did Marchionni and Pelland in Italy, Talma and Rachel in France.

But, while advocating careful instruction, my objection to academies is founded on the autocratic conventionality which rules with an iron sceptre in such establishments. On the French stage you will see, as a rule, every young actor make love with uniform gestures and identically the same trembling of the voice and of the hands, regardless of what his

individual temperament would impel him to do; while one *ingénue* cannot be differentiated from another, so identical are their modesty, their sportiveness, their lamb-like ways. Against this monotony, I confess, my spirit rebels.

My practical experience is that, when by fortune a good guide is met with in the person of a tried director, his first task will be to make his pupil recite some passage of poetry or prose in order to enable the teacher to judge of the manner in which he expresses his sentiments, what qualities he possesses and wherein he must correct himself; for not every one expresses grief, joy, and indifference in the same way.

The true teacher should before all be able to discern how much there is of personality in the pupil, and this personality must not be fettered and subjected to servile imitations. Rivers run to the sea even without the help of engineers; but young actors, without the help of a teacher such as I mean, make no step in advance. Even with exceptional talent I doubt they can find their way alone. The teacher must only guide the pupil's inclination, not substitute his own; he must, in fact, help the pupil to develop the gifts he has in embryo, leaving intact his originality.

The true actor says with Schiller's Marquis de Posa, "I will not become the chisel since it is given me to be the workman." He who will, I do not say excel in, but at least not mar the dramatic art, requires, besides aptitude, both figure and voice. To be sure, by indefatigable study, one, with even a poor voice or of insignificant build, may succeed in becoming distinguished. Even on the stage will is power, and I have known actors who, wanting in fibre, or voice, or figure, have yet succeeded in rising out of the crowd; but one flower

alone does not make a spring, and if it does blossom, in spite of its sweet fragrance, the weakness of its stalk will still be apparent.

A Giacomo Leopardi may perhaps succeed in writing a *HAMLET*; but in performing it on the stage—never! Let me narrate a case which, among many others, recurs to my memory, and which came under my notice here in Rome, during the Jubilee of Leo the Thirteenth.

One day my servant came to tell me that a young girl, a pilgrim come to Rome on this occasion, begged the favour of an audience with me. I complied with her request and she was admitted. Trembling, hesitating, her emotion nearly choking her, the young girl came forward, curtsying low and stammering out excuses for having had the boldness to present herself before me without an introduction. "Come," said I, touched by the sight of so much gentleness and humility, "sit down and tell me why you have come to see me." And she, in still greater trepidation than she had yet shown, but overcoming herself, told me, that from her childhood she had had an invincible longing to go on the stage.

I set myself to regard attentively this pilgrim come to Rome to do honour to the Holy Father, and revealing herself to me as an enthusiast for my art. She said that her relations looked upon her vocation with no favour, nay, that they resolutely opposed it and tried by every means to get the idea out of her head, but that she was as resolutely determined to become an actress; and she added that, at any rate, she intended as soon as possible to join a dramatic company; she should never give herself any peace till she had realised her golden dream. Having heard of me and of my living in Rome, she had put in execution her plan of coming

here as a pilgrim with the idea of seeing me; she would have come even barefoot to ask for advice and patronage from me. The poor thing seemed to be quite mad on the subject of dramatic art.

I sat looking at her in silence for some time, I do not know whether with a smile of pity, or with a sense of amazement. She was diminutive of stature, stout, and not pretty; but let the features pass: one may be even plain of feature and yet be most attractive on the stage, if the face be illuminated with the beauty of talent. Fine eyes and a pleasant smile are the first requisites for the face on the stage. The young woman's voice was disagreeable too; but notwithstanding this, had she been cast to play the part of an enthusiast for art, and rendered it as she rendered it to me, she would have been applauded. Very different, however, is the feeling for the truth and its expression on the stage of life from the reproduction of that truth on the boards of the theatre.

"Now, my dear," said I at last, "let me hear what you can do." The poor girl trembled like an aspen-leaf, and I could almost hear the beatings of her heart. However, plucking up her courage at last, she recited a patriotic poem of her own composition. I listened to her attentively. Her gestures were nothing wonderful, her voice not particularly pleasing, and though she rendered the idea of the composition fairly well, she was far from showing sufficient talent to explain her passion for art.

When she had finished, she stood with her eyes fixed on me, as if awaiting the answer of an oracle, and I sat thinking how best to tell her my opinion. Finally I decided that it was best to give her some pain now and spare her much in the future.

"My dear," I said, "you do not

lack feeling, and I see that you are intelligent enough to allow of my telling you the plain truth. You do not always give the proper colouring to the phrases: you are too often declamatory; but this and other defects would not be incorrigible. I must, however, tell you that your person is little fitted for the stage, and your provincial accent is so marked that it would never be tolerated by the public. Then what parts should you wish to play,—title-roles?"

"Yes," she replied. Truly there is no temerity like that of an amateur; no drawing back for them in face of any difficulty whatever. Smiling, I said: "And so, you feel yourself equal to sustaining the part of Mary Stuart or of *La Dame des Camélias*?"

"I think so," she answered with complacency.

"And I am not quite of your opinion," I said. "I should not advise your attempting anything beyond the part of *soubrette*, or at most of *ingénue*. Before all, you are mistaken if you think that the manager of any but an inferior company will engage you off hand only because you show an enthusiasm for art. If you have an aptitude for acting, which I shall see presently, and cannot obtain advice from a good teacher, try at least to exercise your skill in some philo-dramatic company, or enter, if you can, some modest company, to accustom your eyes, so to speak, to the footlights. Art requires practice; before learning to run one must know how to walk. The criticism of the paying public is quite another thing from the criticism of such as kindly listen gratuitously to the performance of amateurs. Begin with small parts. "*Prendete il monte a più lieve salita* (Begin to climb the mountain at the easiest part of the ascent)" as I was reading in *LA DIVINA COMMEDIA* at

the moment you came in. Many of our best actors have done no otherwise with regard to the first steps in their art, to practise it later in a worthy manner. They were private soldiers before they became leaders; I myself began thus, guided (as, thank God, I was!) by the good sense of my father, who would constantly repeat to me that most elementary theatrical maxim; *Before appearing on the stage, one needs to accustom one's self to the stage.*

"Difficulties are overcome, one at a time, in the solitude of the artist's study. I, for my part, began the ascent of the mountain at the easiest. The attempt to soar, at once, to the summit of art does not seem to me a good experiment. 'Daring is a fine thing, but an excess of it is presumption,' was said in my time; and this wish to become everything, all at once, seems to be one of the evils of our day.

"It is true that Schiller says: 'Here below, there is no throne so steep and high but the strong man may spring on it at one bound.' But of the strong in the dramatic art, who, at one bound, have sprung upon the throne of Gustavus Modena, Talma, Kean, Rachel, Siddons, Salvini, Rossi? I know of none. In addition to the gifts with which one may be endowed, one needs measure, and measure can be acquired only by experience.

"All these rules you will learn more quickly if you have the good fortune to meet with a good guide, a good director. But when I have given you these few hints and this good advice, I shall but have opened your eyes to the road that lies paved before you. Not that I would have anyone be dismayed at its difficulties. The struggle has always intoxicated me; yet I have known young people like you, who have fallen in the

struggle, and have paid dearly for their love of art."

I gilded the pill as thickly as I could, putting all the feeling possible into the effort I was making to accomplish my end. Seeing her almost ready to faint at this sentence and yet resolute, I was touched, and hastened to recommend her to a teacher of an amateur dramatic company; but I was convinced that I was not mistaken, and that my prognostications would be verified. In fact, poor thing, she set to work, to study with all alacrity, but, alas, not with corresponding results. She resigned herself to entering a second-rate company, hoping that by constant practice she might get herself accepted more easily by the public; but all was in vain! I pitied, but could not help her further. Poor girl, I dare say the indulgent friends of whom she spoke were partly to blame for her disappointment as regards her vocation.

For young beginners great harm may arise from their not discerning the difference between the applause bestowed on merit and that given for encouragement, and even more that which is granted not so much to the skill of the actor as to the attractiveness of the person and the pleasantness of the voice. How often do the public, caught by the taking appearance of a young beginner, mar her future by excessive praise of the few qualities she may chance to possess! Such inconsiderate praise cannot give young actors a just measure of their worth, and they consequently believe themselves on the further shore when they have barely unfurled their sails. Hence, they no longer think it necessary to devote themselves to that persevering study in which the actors of all nations who have given the greatest lustre to the dramatic art passed their lives. Alfieri, my own Alfieri, said: "But why do I speak

of Greek to those who are in swaddling clothes in Latin?" And why do I speak of the goal of art to those who, hardly entered on the road, believe themselves to have already travelled over the whole of it? In all good faith they accept the most forcible epithets, which should be applied only to the truly great when they have left behind them their thorn-strewn path and arrived at the apogee of art.

Thorny is this road no less than that of all studies made in every art which is to be exercised worthily later on. Sometimes, it seems as if the forces cannot stand the trial, even in one who may have all the advantages of nature to enable him to reach the goal. I remembered how I redoubled my own efforts, and that to my trepidation I never failed to respond: "Do not fear, you will come off victorious." Without this trepidation on one side, and this persistence on the other, one can never become an actor; the material and intellectual forces are not exercised. It is always the same thing. How could you play Othello or Mary Stuart if, even having the intellectual forces, you are wanting in the physical? And more than all, how can you be led on to approach perfection, if you believe yourself already perfect?

My father, an actor from his childhood, son of a mother full of intelligence and practical good sense, who had herself been an actress of no ordinary renown, never ceased to warn me, wounding even my self-love, by telling me that the enthusiasm I excited in the public was to be attributed to my youth and attractiveness, and that I was not to think myself safe in port. Certainly, if an opportunity had presented itself of getting me into a first-rate company among celebrated actors conducted by a model manager, he, my father, would not have hesitated one moment in making me enter that

company, even to perform inferior parts to those which I played in the company in which I stood pre-eminent. "Better be the head of a lamb than the tail of a lion," says our proverb; but in a dramatic company it is better to be the last in an array of great actors, than the first among inferior ones.

One must be educated to the art of true actors even at the cost of coming on the stage as the bearer of a letter. Hence my father resolved to refuse even the most advantageous offers which would have obliged me to sustain parts beyond my physical and intellectual forces, and the playing of which, by injuring my health, would have ruined my future. Pardon me if I affirm that few actresses can boast of having been more cordially received by the public, more its spoiled child than I was from the first days of my appearance on the stage. In those days lengthened applause and clamorous ovations were seldom lavished on a young girl as they are now; so that my self-love, excited by my youthful fancy, might have carried me away even to fatal intoxication, had I not always had, as a guardian angel, a feeling of modesty in my heart.

How often have I not seen the theatre dressed up with flowers tied with sky-blue and white ribbons, because these were my favourite colours! How many showers of poetry and flowers did there not fall on me! Never was there more eager rivalry than among ladies wishing to show me their sympathy. And all these things might have been fatal to a young girl as I was, and indeed did almost set me against the wise counsels of my father; but he was pitiless. I cannot say how often I afterwards blessed his memory for having put into my heart the doubt whether all these ovations were not a tribute to my youth and beauty rather than to

my worth. I was almost wrathful, and my wrath turning into a rage for study, I set to work with all my might and main.

One evening, raising my eyes from the volume over which I was poring, they fell on Hesper shining more brightly than ever through my window-panes, and a voice seemed to whisper: "Go, study. Without serious training for the stage, beginning at the very beginning of things, the *ignes fatui* of these ovations will soon fade away. See, little by little, the age of maturity is coming on; and without that training, you will end by quenching the springs which nature has set flowing."

I resolved more than ever to give heed to my father, and I still bless his memory. Beauty, voice, good carriage have but an ephemeral worth if an actor be wanting in the true foundation, that is, in the intellect of his art. And not even intellect suffices; one must needs dig deep down for the foundation, to lay stone upon stone and to erect the building one's self. He who does not do all this attains nothing. He must, before all, study, and not superficially, what I call the materialism of the part; in other words, the physical force needed for rendering it; and then he must go on to the study of its idealism, getting at the bottom of the character, giving it its colouring with the colours one has on one's palette, and especially (here lies the difficulty), harmonising, so to say, the colours he possesses with those proper to the type to be rendered.

I had all the colours on my palette, and had also strength of fibre; but I should have spoiled both but for my determined will to come out of my own nature and enter that of the type I wished to represent; whereas it seems to me that certain actresses do nothing else than reduce all types to

their own nature. I dare say this is the most convenient method, but observe; the young man or young woman of fine promise remains a mediocrity, a poor creature, even if successful, who leaves no "foot-prints on the sands of Time."

Let this prompting of mine be, instead, a stimulus to constant study, seeking how to reproduce the varying types of humanity. To seek the true and the beautiful is worth nothing if one cannot overcome the great difficulty of reconciling the true *which the actor has in himself* with the true *in the type to be rendered*. By this path only does the actor reap the reward of his labours. I conclude by saying that it is not even enough to seek the objective truth and make it harmonise with the subjective; one must do more, much more. It is not permissible to faithfully reproduce the true as in nature, because the true in nature is scarcely the root of the artistic true and beautiful; the latter is the flower of the former, and one must not, so to say, pluck up the whole plant; one must only gather the flowers.

The realism which in these days

finds only too many partisans is, in my opinion, as defective as conventionalism and mannerism; and in a way the cleverest of actors is everywhere a loser by it. We have lately had a proof of this. When all Paris was talking about the forthcoming performance of Sardou's CLEOPATRA, much was said of the asp which was to sting the Egyptian's bosom, and of Sarah Bernhardt's training a small snake to go into a little bag which she ingeniously concealed in the folds of her costume. What happened? Sarah Bernhardt could not draw the attention of the public to her tragic death-scene; they were all too intent on watching the unwinding of the creature's tail, as it glided out of the bag, to pay any heed to her beautiful acting.

Here I bring to an end my thoughts on the dramatic art as it has been practised by those who have been its glory and honour, trusting that, if the importance of the subject has made me dwell too long on it, the reader will pardon me—there is still so much more to say.

ADELAIDE RISTORI,
(*Marchesa Del Grillo*).

TWO GREAT PICTURES.

It is not always the strait gate and narrow way which lead to salvation, in spite of all the preachers may insist. In Italy, indeed, it is nothing for nothing, but everything for a farthing in matters both temporal and spiritual. From the closely packed little town of Vicenza, nestled amid its sunny vineyards at the very foot of the blue mountains, to the church of the Madonna which crowns the Monte Berico, any but an Italian could saunter in less than half an hour. All that art and modern contrivance can do to lighten the ascent has been abundantly done. Were difficulty or physical fatigue a necessary condition of ecclesiastical absolution or plenary indulgence, surely none but the halt and lame among the faithful, with here and there a curious traveller, eager for no reward other than the prospect of a fine view and the sight of a couple of rare pictures, would tread the seven hundred yards or so of dusty road leading to the sacred spot. But the Italian loves to earn both his livelihood and his exemption from purgatory on the easiest possible terms, and an indulgent Providence holds out an excellent bargain in the shape of a delightful afternoon's excursion as against many years in that dubious antechamber of Paradise. Hence the pleasant way is seldom deserted, the quiet church rarely empty; and who can say how many pence find their way into the modern Peter's pocket?

But even to the mere pleasure-seeker who hopes for no spiritual benefit, the ascent of Monte Berico is far from the least delightful episode

in the course of his wanderings in North Italy. Vicenza, though indeed it lies on the main line between Milan and Venice, the very high road of tourists, scarcely offers enough of popular interest to tempt the ordinary sight-seer to alight from his express train and risk his night in unrenowned and possibly unclean inns. Hence the occasional visitor may wander at his will, unmolested by the barefooted, tattered urchins, who in Verona or Venice make his path a burden with their never wearying wail of *soldini, soldini*. Here too the greedy sacristan is less on the alert to pounce upon the unwary devotee who, guide-book in hand, endeavours to pierce the dusty darkness which shrouds some golden altar-piece by Bellini or Palma. The Vicentine native has not learned to distinguish between the English *milord*, with his full pocket and free hand, and the portly German whose pompous tread is commensurate with his sense of his own importance; or between the thrifty Frenchman, from whom less may be expected, and the rich American whose inability to utter a word of any but his own lingo makes him an easy prey: *forestieri* covers all alike. As you wander through the quaint Piazza dei Signori, under Palladio's noble arcades, bargaining for ripe purple figs or sweet-scented peaches, you muse on the old proverb which stigmatises the Vicentines as *magnagatti*, or as we should say, stuck-up but greedy. There is but little scope for such a feeling in these days, unless it be in the relics of an ancient long departed

splendour, of which only the tradition lingers on in the stately though neglected palaces which border the cobble-paved streets, within whose wrought-iron gates green vistas of garden and vinery suggest rather peaceful domesticity than proud pretentiousness. Every one of the small towns over which the Venetian Republic exercised her sway maintained an individuality of its own. Thus the citizens of Verona were distinguished for their light-heartedness, *Veronesi, mezzo matti*, a quality amply reflected in the paintings of their school, with its love of gay colour, of birds and animals, fruits and flowers, and debonnair angels tuning their lutes and mandolins. On the learned Paduans, the epithet *Gran dottori* was bestowed, while the Venetians themselves, the proud rulers of this rich domain, received the stately and well-merited designation of *Gran signori*.

Strolling through the streets and piazzas of Vicenza it is impossible to forget the part Palladio played in the beautifying of his native town. After having surfeited your eyes with the elaborate Renaissance palaces and churches with which Venice is thickly sown, this simple, rhythmical style, guiltless of all fuss or flourish, possesses a quiet, harmonious dignity that can hardly fail to charm.

But it is October, the month of vintage, and in a quiet street close beside the *duomo* a merry scene is enacting. Five vast vats, mounted on carts, are piled almost to the brim with black and white grapes, while purple-legged youths in tattered garments and splashed faces stamp out the precious juice, which froths through short pipes inserted near the bottom of the vats into wooden tubs placed below to receive it. Every now and then the grapes are turned over with a pitchfork while men with

large shining copper vessels relieve the tubs when they threaten to overflow, and convey the cloudy crimson liquid to larger receptacles. Bumpers of the yet harmless fluid are freely quaffed and many pleasantries interchanged. Under the blue Italian sky and genial sun work is carried on but leisurely. It is impossible to believe that this is other than a game enacted for your amusement, particularly when, having mounted on the rickety shaft of one of the carts to peep into the winepress, a malicious though scarcely perceptible flick of a foot among the grapes sends you back spattered with purple to the accompaniment of broad grins and unfeigned chuckles of delight. Surely the Italians young and old are but children! Their very attempts to cheat you are childish, and a small joke, be it never so feeble, goes further than torrents of abuse.

Sauntering across the peaceful green Campo Marzio, you enter a broad ascending avenue, flanked on one side by thickly planted chestnut trees, on the other by a handsome arcade, by which you may climb in shady comfort to the church of the Madonna of the Monte, your goal, unless indeed you prefer to ride up on one of the donkeys standing for hire at the foot of the ascent. Nothing is neglected that may sweeten your path, short though it be. Through occasional openings in the wall of the arcade charming little pictures of mountain and fertile plain, or glimpses of distant *campanili* relieve the monotony of white plaster and dazzle you by the radiance of their colour. The green is as fresh as English grass in April, the sky more blue than forget-me-nots; an occasional red roof of villa or church adds a sting of warm colour, and all swims in the golden air.

At the bend in the road you

pause, not for breath, for the ascent is easy enough, but to turn and feast your eyes on the landscape stretched below. Hanging over the low red wall of a vineyard, it is a goodly sight that meets the eye. Just beneath lies Vicenza, blushing pink in the soft afternoon light, Palladio's tower rising like a straight stem above the other belfries and towers. And away beyond the town rise the mountains, their summits veiled in billowing clouds, which foretell the storm that before night will sweep across the plain, filling the trenches in the fields and converting the lazy streamlets into foaming brown torrents. As yet, however, all is still and tranquil as a summer day. The little towns spotted about the hillsides twinkle in the brilliant sunshine. What images their very names conjure up! There to your left lies Asolo, a white cloud on the mountain side. Hither Caterina Cornaro, the widowed Queen of Cyprus, retired to spend her days in graceful dalliance, when ousted from her throne by Venetian intrigue. Here too the courtly Bembo, that chief of the Apes of Cicero, as Erasmus scornfully dubbed them, often repaired from his Paduan villa, to which he had betaken himself worn out with a life of graceful indolence, Bembo, the friend of Lucrezia Borgia, after that much maligned lady, having espoused Alfonso of Este, settled down into a life of comparatively uneventful respectability at the Court of Ferrara. To her indeed he dedicated *GLI ASOLANI*, his treatise on Platonic love, and to this day the curious in such matters may see a bundle of her letters and a lock of her yellow hair preserved in the Ambrosiana at Milan. We catch a glimpse of this same Bembo in the pages of the *CORTIGIANO*, that mirror of fine manners and good breeding emanating from the most polished

centre of Italian life, the Court of Urbino. Lower down on the plain you may descry Castelfranco, the birthplace of the romantic Giorgione, whose wonderful altar-piece is still enshrined in the great, bare *duomo* of the quiet little town. Feltre, Bassano, Cittadella, and a host of names soft to the tongue, rush to the mind as the eye travels along the blue ridge, and where the eyesight fails, the imagination may still supply the gap.

But time will not stand still, even in Italy, and as you turn to continue the ascent, the goal of your wanderings rises suddenly before you. The straight avenue leads direct to the domed church of the Madonna of the Monte, whose tall red *campanile*, with its blue-faced clock, dominates the approach. Five minutes' easy walk, and you stand on the flight of steps leading to the church-door. You enter, and when your eyes have become accustomed to the change of light, you perceive that the glitter within is scarcely less than the glare outside. It is indeed a temple of tinsel, this holy shrine. Wherever the eye roves it encounters gilding. The altar is encrusted with votive offerings, the walls hung with tawdry pictures. From a side chapel the monotonous droning of some sacred office seems to lull the heavy, incense-laden air, and little wonder is it that two of the kneeling pilgrims who have perspired up the easy slope, have pillowed their heavy heads on their brown arms and fallen into an uneasy slumber. A glance suffices to sweep in these impressions, and you pass on to the secluded chapel or sanctuary to the right of the high altar.

Here indeed is reward for your labour, if labour it were. Behind the altar, half concealed by the tall candles and tawdry paper flowers, glows the wonderful *Pietà*, painted, as its inscription tells, by the Vicentine

artist, Montagna, in the year 1500 As you gaze, a sense of the solemnity of the scene creeps over your soul. The gilt and tinsel vanish, the droning is heard no longer. You stand alone in the presence of a great grief, a portentous event, pregnant with mystery and awe. On a kind of rocky platform in the centre, sits the Madonna holding on her lap the dead Christ, whose head she lovingly supports in one hand, while with sorrowful eyes she gazes on the beloved features, now so calm and passive in death. On the right, St. John, with clasped hands, bends as though in reverent worship, and in front the kneeling Magdalen bewails the cruel wounds in her Master's feet. On the other side St. Peter looks out from the canvas as though appealing for your sympathy and participation in the mournful scene. Seldom has this well-worn subject been treated with greater understanding and depth of feeling. Nothing could exceed the intensity of expression in the faces of the Madonna and St. John, yet there is no touch of exaggeration or caricature, no affectation or hysteria. In the background a peaceful landscape relieves the tension of the scene; the grey sky is swept with light, windy clouds; the hill-side is dotted with trees and red brick buildings to which a winding road ascends. Indeed the landscape suggests the neighbourhood of the hill itself, whose green slopes the artist had doubtless often climbed while painting this altar-piece for the church of the Madonna. The poetry of the spot seems to have held him in its spell as he painted this delightful distance, so full of atmosphere and feeling of breezy space. For Montagna was a citizen of Vicenza, its one painter of great note and originality, and it is in the churches and picture-gallery of his native place that he may still be seen to best advantage in fresco and altar-piece. He seems to have been a pupil

of Alvise Vivarini, and to have come under the influence of Gentile Bellini, and perhaps also of Carpaccio; but he kept a strong individuality both in drawing and in his feeling for deep, glowing colour. He, like Mantegna, who by the way was born in Vicenza though he subsequently settled in Padua, inclines to the sterner aspects of nature and humanity. His pictures impress by their force and vigour of conception, but seldom delight or charm by those softer qualities which we love in Giovanni Bellini or that playful *genre* by which Carpaccio captivates. Yet sometimes in his landscapes, as here, Montagna shows himself a true poet. Indeed in this picture he almost touches the sublime.

From the church you are led by a sober black-robed brother down a short flight of steps to the former refectory of the monastery in which a few monks still linger on, doubtless in daily expectation of corporate as well as individual dissolution. At the end of the long, bare apartment, now so deserted and desolate, one of Paolo Veronese's great supper-pieces still hangs on the wall for which the painter designed it. It represents the Feast of Gregory, in illustration of the old legend that Pope Gregory, unaware of the honour done him, once entertained Christ Himself in the guise of a pilgrim. Doubtless the subject formed an excellent topic for the reflection of the monks, as they sat over their frugal meals amid the silence which was always strictly enforced; but the spiritual element of the story is the last theme on which the painter chose to insist. Brilliant pageantry, Palladian architecture, massive robust men and women in gorgeous garments, sunshine and light, life and colour, all the elements in fact which constituted the brilliant life of Venice in the sixteenth century, these are the im-

pressions he conveys to the gazer. Into the very centre of the rigid monastic life, which has renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, Veronese daringly introduces all three, clothing them with a splendour and a fascination that might well strike discontent into the mind of some half-hearted brother whose thoughts have not yet set wholly heavenwards. Perhaps, and fortunately in this case, the danger was more apparent than real. It is not often that we look at the pictures in whose company we live, and possibly many a monk who had dined daily during a score of years beneath the Feast of Gregory had scarce ever raised his eyes above his plate and cup to the glowing canvas at the end of the room, and could barely recall an incident of the scene.

As the eye wanders over the multitudinous detail of this wealthy canvas, revelling in its colour, stimulated in every nerve by its exuberant vitality, you realise to the full that here as in the other great supper-pictures by Veronese,—the sumptuous Marriage of Cana in the Louvre, perhaps his masterpiece, the Feast in the House of Levi at Venice—the subject has been merely the most transparent pretext for all this magnificence.

This feast is actually a banquet of modern date, the guests Venetian nobles and grandes of the painter's day, the scene a gallery in a Venetian palace. All Veronese's usual paraphernalia are here, pages in gold brocade carrying in the meats, spectators on a balcony behind, the monkey, the dog, the small spaniel held by a boy in striped tunic and trunk-hose, even to the cat whose green eyes gleam out from under the table. It was for such frivolities that Paolo fell under the suspicion of the dreaded Inquisition, and was called

before it to answer to certain charges brought against his orthodoxy. Had he not introduced into a picture in which Christ and many holy personages were present a number of German mercenaries, hated Lutherans, dogs of heretics, together with such unworthy objects as buffoons, dwarfs, and other fooleries? Was not one of the holy apostles represented in the act of picking his sacred teeth with a common fork? The poor painter, puzzled at these grave charges, and hopelessly out of touch with his inquisitors' point of view, tried vainly to explain that his motives were æsthetic and not religious, either in the way of orthodoxy or heterodoxy. A blank space in the composition must be filled, and what more decorative than the inventions he had chosen for the purpose. It was fortunate for him that he escaped with a reprimand and an order to remove the obnoxious figures at his own expense. To a painter whose whole preoccupation was with colour, sunlight, and joyous life, such hair-splitting must have appeared little less than idiocy.

In spite of all the vicissitudes it has undergone, for in 1848 it was torn to pieces by unappreciative Austrian soldiers, the picture is in good condition, though some of its splendour of colour has vanished for ever. The feast is held at a long table spread under a *loggia*. The Pope is sitting in the centre, the stranger pilgrim on his right lifts the cover of a dish which he holds. One of the cardinals, seated on the nearer side of the table, seems to suspect something unusual in the guest, for he gazes intently through his heavy rimmed spectacles across the table at Christ. In one corner of the picture a delightful incident occurs. A crowd of sturdy beggars, old men and women with babies in their arms, have assem-

bled to witness the repast. One of the guests, a young man, filled with compassion surreptitiously passes a loaf of bread behind the pillar to the nearest suppliant. For the rest, the scene is one of movement, bustle, and unsurpassed magnificence. As you turn from it to leave the dreary refectory, you feel an inevitable pang of regret that all this splendour should be enacted day by day to bare walls and hollow-sounding floor. Yet there is unending pleasure to the wanderer in the finding of such a jewel off the beaten track, and the great Paolo can well afford that one of his treasures should be hidden under a bushel since he has strewn his gems so lavishly over the walls and ceilings of Venice.

So in great contentment you retrace your steps through the gaudy church, where the droning still persists, and emerge again into the brilliant sun shine of the Italian afternoon. As you swing down the avenue, your curiosity satisfied, your expectations

fulfilled, you note the beggar-boys lying about the arcade in fantastic coils of brown legs and arms; the old women and girls bending to pick up the chestnuts which, smooth and glossy brown, strew the ground, the stalls with their motley assortment of trumpery, the lemonade-sellers crouched beside their burnished copper bowls. Stalwart pilgrims mounted on little donkeys descend the hill at a smart jog-trot; their piety satisfied, they forget the story of Baalam and his works. Indeed the whole pilgrimage is little more than a pleasant summer fairing, with the additional spice of some substantial but not too definite advantage in the hereafter. And standing on the green sward at the foot of the hill, you take a last glance at the gay group of buildings clustered on its summit, with feelings of gratitude for a system which calls its votaries to sacrifice in such pleasant places.

M. H. WITT.

AT MERLINCOURT.

Ah, the benison of dawn
 Waking on a night of weeping !
 All night long to hear, unsleeping,
 Plashing pathway, sodden lawn,
 Echoing the dull insistent
 Diapason of the storm-tost
 South wind through the forest sweeping,
 Like the sobbing of the lost,
 Like the moans of anguish drawn
 From the lips of unresistant
 Harassed souls in torment keeping !

Now, with flush of orient fires,
 Flame the solemn poplar spires ;
 Now the lawns, still wet with rain,
 Lie with shadows overlain ;
 And the blackbird, golden-throated,
 High in his embowered resort,
 Chants the matin-note of day
 Where the drowsy branches away
 Over old-world, tower'd, and moated,
 Triple-tower'd and mirror-moated,
 Many-memored Merlincourt.

Merlincourt, that once you loved,
 Home of antique northern graces,
 Wakes, in beauties you approved,
 Fragrant copses, moss-grown spaces,
 Scent and shadow, birds and trees.
 Musing does a rare thought come
 Winged with light regret to these
 From your far-off island home ?

Nay, I trow not ! Sleep affrighted,
 In night-trances I have guess'd
 Gloomed with purples, amber-lighted
 Splendours of the tropic West.
 Lands more fair, that call you queen,
 In sad visions I have seen,
 Where day's bright effulgencies,

Led through pomps processional, glow
Into starry, hyaline,
Amaranth deeps and mysteries.
Beauty's fountain-heads are these,
Murmurous surfs, and isles that owe
Inviolable bonds to sapphire seas.

Yet, methinks, this immemorial
Day, new-born from night's despairing,
Some faint, phantom'd, half corporeal
Thought of mine is faring, faring
Through the fire-flies, through the musk,
Through the star-enamelled dusk,
To your dreaming, and you know
How I loved you long ago.

▲. K

THE FAUST OF THE MARIONETTES.

THE marionette theatre, although once extremely popular both in France and England, never attained in those countries to the position which it long occupied in Germany. French and English actors of the seventeenth century both found reason to be jealous of their insidious little competitors; but during the long agony of the Thirty Years' War and the period of depression which followed it, the mimic actors of the German puppet-show had few rivals, and the German dramatic instinct seemed to find full satisfaction in the marionette stage. The epochs which produced Shakespeare and Jonson, Corneille and Molière, would have been blank pages in the history of German literature had it not been for the hymns into which the poetic genius of the age breathed a wistful beauty which gives them a place of their own among the spiritual songs of the world.

The art which ended in the wandering showman's booth at a country-fair began life as the handmaid of religion; the marionette principle was first utilised (in Europe) to animate the sacred images which were adored at the altars of the Church. In remembrance of its high descent, the marionette plays were for a long time mainly of Biblical origin. "I know this man well," says Autolycus in *THE WINTER'S TALE*. "He hath been a process-server, a bailiff; then he compassed a motion [a puppet-show] of the Prodigal Son." "When God gave Adam reason," says Milton in the *AREOPAGITICA*, "He gave him freedom to choose; he had else been a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he

is in the motions." The marionette-manager became by degrees very large-minded and fairly ambitious in his choice of plays. Classical or romantic, antique or modern, *Medea*, *Alcestis*, *Mariana* or the *Female Brigand*, *Judith* and *Holofernes*, *Don Juan*, *Le Malade Imaginaire*, — anything was acceptable provided that it permitted the introduction of a good moral and a laughable clown. *The Life and Death of St. Dorothea* was a special favourite on account of the ingenious mechanism which permitted the martyr to be neatly decapitated in full view of the audience, in happy contrast to the shifts to which the regular drama is reduced at such a crisis. But of all the plays on this mimic stage *THE TRAGEDY OF DOCTOR FAUST* held the place of honour.

The date of the marionette *FAUST* is unknown; it is perhaps not much younger than Marlowe's *FAUST* which was played at Dresden in 1626 by the English comedians, and may have inspired the German dramatist. Nor do we know for certain whether the play was originally written for the miniature stage or whether the writer aimed higher and missed his mark. The traditional text made its first appearance in print not much more than fifty years ago, and it must have been considerably modified since it left the hands of its unknown author not later probably than the middle of the seventeenth century. A special interest attaches to this old German drama of which there are several versions; it was not played at Strassburg exactly as it was played at Augsburg, at Ulm, or at Cologne, but

in essentials it is the same. It is one of the only three modern renderings of the Faust-legend which have in them any spark of vitality, its author handling his theme with a finer dramatic perception than Marlowe; and it was this work which suggested to Goethe the idea of his masterpiece. In this small pool he saw reflected the vain desire and the vain regret which made up so much of the sum of his own life; and from the significant puppet-show fable, as he calls it, he gained a vision of the soul of man which haunted him all his days.

Both Marlowe's FAUST and the FAUST of the marionettes were based on the volume published by the Frankfort bookseller, Johann Spies, and sold for the first time at the autumn fair of 1587. The Doctor John Faust whose scandalous career forms the basis of the Frankfort bookseller's compilation, was a disreputable charlatan who wandered through Germany in the early part of the sixteenth century. He was known to Melancthon (near whose home he was born) and to other writers of the time, one of whom describes him as being famous "not only for his skill in medicine but in necromancy and other similar arts." Probably he was identical with the notorious impostor Georgius Sabellicus,—*fons necromanticorum, magus secundus, chiromanticus, aeromanticus, pyromanticus*—who styled himself, in addition to all these titles, Faustus Junior, pointing thus backward to an earlier Faust whose traces have disappeared. It has been supposed that this earlier Faust may have been the Bishop Faustinus of Riez in Provence who was seduced from the right way by Simon Magus; or else that he was Johann Fust, the printer of Mainz, who was traditionally declared to have been in danger of being burned as a sorcerer; but upon these points no certainty seems

possible. We know very little about the clever conjuror who contrived somehow to trick destiny into granting him a seat among the Immortals.

John Faust flourished, as the old chronologies say, in the sixteenth century, but the Faust-legend is as old as Christendom. Its black fantastic shadow haunted every medieval hearth; it lurked in the crowded street and in the quiet woodland; the holiest places could not shut it out. The grimest version is that which tells how Pope Sylvester the Second, before he became the Vicar of Christ, pledged himself to the Evil One in order to become wiser than is permitted to mortal man; he was saying mass one morning when the Devil crept behind him as he stood at the high altar and whispering in his ear that his hour was come, carried him down to hell from the very threshold of heaven. The Reformation, which broke with so many traditions, held this one sacred; and the HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUST was evidently compiled by a Protestant theologian. But in the handling of it there is, as Kuno Fischer points out in his study of Goethe's FAUST, a notable difference. In the medieval story there is always at the last moment a hope of intervention; the Church has power to defend her children from the great adversary of souls. Trickery may be met by trickery (for who would feel bound to keep faith with the Father of Lies?), and sometimes the Devil is cheated out of his prey by a cunning ruse, sometimes, as in the case of the clerk Theophilus, he is defeated by the direct and irresistible interposition of Our Lady. The point constantly insisted upon is that there are more ways than one of getting out of a bad bargain, and that the Church has a very long arm. In the teaching of the Reformation we miss this consol-

ing reflection. Here the man must abide by his compact, or at least must look for no external ally to rescue him from the consequences of it. There is always hope for the penitent soul on this side of the grave, and he is not finally lost when he signs the dire agreement; but he must fight out his own quarrel. No saint will stoop from Paradise to take his part in the conflict; no counter magic of sacred rite and relic can avail him anything; the tempter and the tempted stand face to face, and Heaven looks on in silence. It is this austere and very tragic circumstance which distinguishes the Faust of the sixteenth century from his spiritual ancestors.

The author of the marionette-play opens, as Marlowe and Goethe do, with Faust alone in his study, meditating upon his wasted years of solitary research. The days and nights devoted to the pursuit of learning have profited him nothing; poor, friendless, and burdened by debt, in despair he turns to the Black Arts to help him to the success which is otherwise unattainable. His monologue is disturbed by two voices which float faintly into the room; he recognises the one as that of his guardian angel warning him to go no further, but he listens instead to the other, that of an evil spirit who urges him to proceed. His servant Wagner interrupts his reflections by informing him that he has met at the inn two students who have a book which they wish to present to him; the title of it is *THE KEY OF MAGIC*. Faust, much agitated by this coincidence, bids Wagner bring the strangers to him when they have been suitably entertained; but Wagner returns with the news that the students have unaccountably disappeared leaving their book behind them. There is no comparison between the artistic effect of this unaccountable visit, and that of the substantial Valdes and

Cornelius who make Marlowe's hero "blest with their sage conference." Repairing at midnight to a solitary place where four roads meet, Faust draws the magic circle and with the aid of *THE KEY OF MAGIC* calls up demons. Of the six spirits who appear he will have the swiftest to serve him, and questions each in turn. The first is swift as the shaft of the pestilence, the second as the wings of the wind, the third as a ray of light, the fourth as the thought of man, the fifth as the vengeance of the Avenger. "His vengeance is swift!" says Faust; "and yet I live, and yet I sin! And thou, Mephistopheles?"

"As swift," says Mephistopheles, "as the passage from the first sin to the second."

"That is swift indeed," says Faust. "Thou art the devil for me."

This dramatic incident has no counterpart in Marlowe, and this is the more surprising because it is based on a chapter in the Frankfort book, which Marlowe followed in the main much more closely than his German successor.

The next scene introduces Kasperle, the clownish peasant who brings the necessary element of buffoonery into the play, and is engaged by Wagner as his assistant. The signing of the compact follows, and Mephistopheles engages to serve Faust for four and twenty years, receiving his soul for a wage. Faust makes only two conditions; he is to enjoy all the delights of the world, and to receive a true answer to every question. Then he sends for an inkbottle, but the devil laughs at his inexperience and explains that he must sign the agreement in

¹ There are several readings of this scene. Another, probably an older version, has only three spirits, as swift as a snail in the sand, an arrow from the bow, and the thought of man. In another Mephistopheles claims to be as swift as the passage from good to evil,—a very unsatisfactory comparison.

his own blood, and, this being done, a raven flits into the room and flies away with the parchments in his beak. Faust, who has confronted the demons fearlessly on his lonely heath at midnight, is naively alarmed by the appearance of the black messenger. "What was that?" he cries. "Woe is me!" "Courage, Faust!" answers Mephistopheles. "It was only a bird of hell sent by my prince Pluto to carry him your writing." But Faust cannot be reassured. "Oh Mephistopheles," he says reproachfully, "was there no other way of sending him the paper except by that bird of hell? See how I quake with terror!" Mephistopheles carries him then to the court of Parma where he entertains the Duke and Duchess by magical shows, calling up for their gratification Samson and Delilah, David and Goliath, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. We are told that from Parma they travelled to Constantinople, but of this voyage we hear nothing. With remarkable self-restraint the marionette-play omits the burlesque scenes with the Pope and the friars, with the Emperor's knight, and with the horse courser, which Marlowe transferred from the history direct into his drama. Faust is here always taken seriously, the farcical scenes being provided by Kasperle. Kasperle is a ludicrous parody of his master. He too has dealings with the Evil One, having meddled with Faust's magic circle and picked up the words of incantation; but unlike the unhappy scholar he finds necromancy a very harmless diversion. He stoutly refuses to sign away his soul on the plea that he cannot write his name; but having discovered that at the word *Perlippe* the demons appear and at *Perlappe* they vanish again, he pronounces the potent syllables so often that the spirits get out of breath and very irritable.

In the last act we find Faust again in Wittenberg where Kasperle, who had scruples of conscience about remaining in the sorcerer's service, has now the post of night-watchman. During the twelve years that have passed since the signing of his compact, Faust has had his fill of pleasure and found it vanity, and has at last turned homeward, sick at heart and bent on finding if possible some place of repentance. In his dreadful extremity he puts the question to his only companion, and enquires of Mephistopheles whether it is possible for such a sinner as he is to come even now to God. The devil curtly refuses to answer; Faust presses for a reply, and he maintains a sullen silence; then Faust reminds him of his pledge, —the strangest surely ever exacted from the deceiver of souls—and Mephistopheles vanishes trembling with a terrible cry. Full of new hope Faust throws himself before a statue of the Virgin, weeping and praying; but Mephistopheles, seeing his prey about to escape him, returns and bids Faust rise and look upon the bride he has brought him,—Helen of Greece. Faust tells him to be gone and leave him to his prayers,—he did not think, alas, of saying *Perlappe*—but Mephistopheles insists upon his taking at least one look. Faust still refuses. "Lying spirit," he says, "you bring me but a wreath of mist that will vanish at a touch." "Not so," says Mephistopheles; "stand up and judge for yourself." The tempter has his way. Faust rises, lifts Helen's veil, and straightway forgetting his penitential resolves, carries her off in a rapture of wonder and delight, but only to rush back in a moment to overwhelm Mephistopheles with furious reproaches. The lovely vision has turned to a serpent in his embrace; the devil has deceived him. "What else," says Mephistopheles drily, "did you expect from the devil?"

In the next scene Faust is startled by the appearance of Mephistopheles in the hideous form in which he had first seen him; and the evil spirit explains that he has come in his own shape because Faust's hour is at hand. He had engaged to serve him for twenty-four years, but since Faust has employed him by night as well as by day, the allotted period will be at an end that night on the stroke of twelve. Left once more alone, Faust throws himself again on his knees before the Virgin's image, but as he gazes, a change passes over the sculptured marble, and Helen rises before him where Our Lady should have stood. Now he knows himself lost indeed, and he wanders forlorn and desperate through the empty streets until he encounters Kasperle going his rounds as night-watchman. "Ah, it is you, Kasperle," he says, recognising his old servant and catching at any human fellowship in his misery. "You have come to light me home?"

"Not I," says Kasperle; "I light no man home now-a-day. I am a night-watchman of this town and my own master and my own Lord Chamberlain; and if I find any one abroad in the streets after ten I have orders to march him straight to the lock-up. You'd best not let me find you here when I come back." Faust still entreats his company. If Kasperle will light him home, he shall be rewarded by a good suit of clothes; but Kasperle repels this offer in which he perceives a snare. "No, no," he says, "I wear no clothes of yours. Who knows if down yonder they might not take me for you?"

Some such hope as this seems to have flickered in Faust's breast; for all his intimacy with Mephistopheles, he still credits the devil with a remarkable degree of simplicity. The notion that he might escape his awful penalty by changing his coat is one of

those childish touches which are in curious contrast to the general treatment of the plot; it recalls the student in Marlowe's play who suggests that the master's anguish of mind at his approaching doom may be perhaps the result of his having over-eaten himself on the previous day. Ten o'clock strikes and then eleven, and as Kasperle hoarsely chants the rhyme of the hour Faust hears a solemn whisper pronouncing sentence upon him. "Go," he says to Kasperle as midnight draws near, "and stay not to see the dreadful end to which I hasten." "So it is true then," says Kasperle, "and the devil is really coming to fetch you as people said he would? Well, good night, and a pleasant journey to you!" He goes out; the fiends carry Faust off, and Kasperle returns presently to find him gone. "Poof," says he, "what a smell of brimstone!"

Both Marlowe's play and the marionette FAUST are based as has been said upon the adventures of Doctor Faust as recorded in the Frankfort volume; and the German writer has handled his material much more freely than Marlowe did. But the main difference between them does not consist merely of selections or omissions; there is a characteristic divergence in the conception of the plot. In Marlowe's play, as in Goethe's, the issue is never doubtful. Goethe's Faust is certain from the beginning of ultimate salvation; he does not make a compact; he only lays a wager with the Devil, a wager, which we know from the prologue, Mephistopheles has no chance of winning. There was not a trace of the mediæval spirit in Goethe's imperial intellect; not renunciation but development was for him the keynote of life; and in all the universe he could discover no place where man could turn his back upon God. He did

not venture,—no modern writer could venture—to set before us the great legend in the naked simplicity of its original conception; in the older Faust-stories there is no secondary motive, no love, no jealousy, no revenge. They dealt with a question so absorbing, so supreme, that it compelled the attention and was independent of other aid. But for Goethe, and for Goethe's world, the question had lost its point; and in the light of Goethe's sanguine view of the future, the tragic element of the drama disappeared. It was necessary to replace it, and we find it accordingly in a love-story so tender and passionate that for many readers Faust is before all a love-story. Marlowe, on the other hand, did not shrink from presenting the tragedy to us in its primitive form. In his play there are virtually only two actors, the man and his enemy; the other characters, princes, clowns, and students, pass and repass like shadows. Here, too, the issue is certain; this Faust is damned from the beginning of the play. Wealthy, successful, famous, he is driven to his fall by the pride of life, by the lust of limitless possession. He has so much that he must have more.

All things that move between the quiet
poles
Shall be at my command.

In the Frankfort book, the reprobate "took to himself eagles' wings and was fain to sound the abysses of heaven and earth"; here he does not believe in any unsounded abysses. He gibes at the Devil's vain longing for the heaven he has lost:

What, is great Mephistopheles so
passionate

For being deprived of the joys of heaven?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude.

He meets Mephistopheles's foreboding
of a time when

All places shall be hell that are not
heaven,

with the cheerful retort,

I think hell is a fable.

He rejects the miraculous "staying of
the blood" in which he was signing
his compact with careless defiance.

Faustus gives to thee his soul: ah,
there it stay'd!

Why should'st thou not? Is not thy
soul thine own?

It is plain that this cynical, confident sinner had travelled far on the road to perdition before the Devil appeared to show him the shortest way.

The fate of the marionette Faust, on the contrary, is no foregone conclusion. He is no famous and successful teacher, but a hungry, anxious, disappointed man with whom the world has dealt very hardly. Yet while Goethe's Faust desires to live, and Marlowe's to possess, this poor scholar, the child of the Renaissance, is devoured by the craving to know. He is lost, but he might have been saved: by Mephistopheles's own admission, his fate was not sealed till the last act; and we might indeed imagine that the author had struggled hard with himself before condemning this tired seeker after truth to eternal torment. This lends a human interest to the marionette drama which is missing in Marlowe's mighty lines.

H. C. MACDOWALL.

A NAVAL CHAPTER IN INDIAN HISTORY.

We are generally accustomed to take it for granted that, in the very nature of things and by right divine, Britannia rules the waves. Unfortunately it is not so. For some centuries she has claimed the dominion of the sea as her prerogative; but there have been times, and not a few of them, when her sovereignty has dwindled down almost to the point of extinction. It is admitted, by those who are best qualified to judge, that at one time within the last thirty years our naval forces were so weakened that we should have been hard put to it to maintain our supremacy if it had been seriously challenged. The maintenance of our naval and military strength has ceased to be a question for the decision of governments alone. In all times of peace the country is liable to be seized by a penurious fit. It grudges the heavy premium which it has to pay for imperial and commercial insurance: the army and navy are denounced as "bloated armaments" and suffered to fall into a decline; and for a season the rich and helpless British Empire is left naked to its enemies, while the few political personages who dare to denounce the national folly are out of office. Then come a sudden panic and a rumour of war; the imperial temperature rises to fever-heat, and millions are lavished in order to do, hurriedly and imperfectly, what ought to have been thoroughly done for half the money. That is our modern and democratic fashion of playing ducks and drakes with our patrimony. In earlier times the same thing was done in a different way.

Why was it that our naval power, which had been supreme at the end of the seventeenth century, fell so low before the middle of the eighteenth? In 1692 Russell crushed one French fleet at La Hogue: in 1744 Matthews was left by his captains to fight another almost alone; and in 1756 Byng failed to make any impression upon a third, and after a council of war decided to abandon even the attempt. No doubt there were many reasons, but our failure was principally owing to our clumsy fleet-tactics and the incapacity of our flag-officers.

The line of battle, which is said to have been first formed by Penn in 1653, the line ahead, was the formation which best developed the gun-power of broadside-battery ships; but later admirals with less fighting experience elevated it into a fetish, and regarded the maintenance of its perfection as the end rather than the means of battle. It was not the first time that the value of a special fighting formation had been exaggerated. The Italian school of naval tactics, which won the battle of Lepanto, was admirably suited to a fleet of galleys, propelled by oars and able to move in any direction as freely as the *tercias* of Spanish infantry whose parade-movements it imitated; but when it was proposed to apply its principles to a fleet of sailing-ships, Sir William Monson extinguished the idea. "The weather at sea," he wrote, "is never certain; the winds variable; ships unequal in sailing; and when they strictly seek to keep their order, commonly they fall foul of one another, and in such cases they are more careful to observe

their directions than to offend the enemy." But there was no Monson to revise the fighting-orders of the navy which proclaimed the sanctity of the line of battle, and denounced the officer who dared to break it or allow it to be broken. In 1744 Admiral Matthews bore down out of the line, because while he remained in it he could not get within range of his enemy. Lestock, his second in command, refused to follow him, and remained orthodox but ineffective. Matthews, for fighting in an unprofessional manner, was sentenced to be cashiered; Lestock, who did not fight at all, was acquitted. He pleaded in his defence that he could not have engaged without breaking the line, which he dared not do, because the signal to form line was not hauled down when the subsequent signal to engage was thrown out. Most probably he had other reasons which he did not mention. Campbell denounced him as "an artful, vindictive disciplinarian" whose principal object was to ruin Matthews;¹ which is probable enough, for at that time personal quarrels and political prejudices were frequently gratified at the expense of the vital interests of the country; a form of treason which seems to have been banished from the navy, although it may still be seen in action at Westminster.

All offensive tactics, in order to be effective, either afloat or ashore, must be directed to the attainment of one object. That object may be briefly described as a concentration of the attack upon the weakest portion of the defence; but the naval authorities of that day had a different conception of the ideal sea-fight, and its perfection could be attained in two ways. In the one, two lines of ships filed past one another in stately

procession on opposite tacks, and exchanged their broadsides in passing, like medieval knights who jousted in a tournament; in the other, two lines of ships moving in the same direction were accurately pitted against each other, each ship engaging her proper opposite in the enemy's line, to fight it out, "shot for shot, and damn all favours." There was a fascinating flavour of chivalry about the business, but it was unpractical, and rarely, if ever, decisive.

The nation was utterly disgusted with the ill success of its fleets: even the naval authorities seem to have had misgivings; but one of the first to diagnose the disease and suggest the remedy was a landsman. John Clerk of Eldin, that wonderful theorist who never went to sea and yet formulated a system of naval tactics which gained the commendation of such men as Rodney, Jervis, and Duncan, wrote his book before 1782, though it was not published till some years later; in it he declared that in the late sea-engagements the British had never once been able to close with, follow up, or detain for a moment, a single ship of the enemy. The French had never risked an attack, and had invariably chosen the leeward position; while the British attack had always been made in a long extended line, generally from the windward, by directing each individual ship upon her opposite in the enemy's line. The French had always disabled the British fleets as they came down to the attack; and having done so, either withdrew their ships to form a new line to leeward, or made sail ahead, demolishing our van ships in passing. From this he argued that they possessed a system of tactics of which our officers were ignorant, and that it was superior to ours.

While our fleets had been so feebly handled and so unsuccessful, we had

¹ LIVES OF THE ADMIRALS, iv. 50.

been generally victorious in single-ship actions. Our officers could handle ships and small squadrons as well as ever; but when they found themselves in command of large fleets they seemed to be paralysed by a sense of responsibility, and a superstitious reverence for the fighting-orders. But better men were coming to the front; the flags of Hawke and Boscawen were already flying, Rodney, Keppel, Howe and Hood were post-captains, and whatever may have been the merits of the French school of fleet-tactics, the day of its success was nearly over.

The evil days were at their darkest in 1758. Our national memory for troubles is so short that most of us have forgotten how heavily the clouds then lowered over England. Brad-dock's defeat in 1755 had been followed by Byng's, and the loss of Minorca only preceded by three weeks the loss of Calcutta and the horrors of the Black Hole. The Great Commoner's first experience as a war-minister was of almost unbroken failure. The Duke of Cumberland's defeat at Hastenbeck, the first and unsuccessful attack on Ticonderoga, the fruitless attempts on Rochefort and St. Malo,—so the panorama of misfortune continued to unroll itself. The captures of Louisbourg and Ticonderoga could not balance the account. Ruin seemed imminent, and the country's distress was such that it wrung even from polished, cynical Chesterfield that cry of despair, "We are no longer a nation!"

But the dawn was already breaking in the East. Clive, the civilian, with Admirals Watson and Pocock, recovered Calcutta in January, 1757, and very nearly came to blows afterwards. When Clive entered the fort at the head of the Company's troops, Captain (afterwards Sir Eyre) Coote presented a commission signed by

Admiral Watson, appointing him governor of the fort. Clive denied the Admiral's right to appoint a junior officer in the King's service as governor of the Honourable Company's fort, and threatened Coote with arrest. Watson sent to ask by what authority Clive assumed command; and Clive answered, by his commission as lieutenant-colonel commanding the land-forces. Thereupon Watson sent him a veritable ultimatum, informing him that "if he did not abandon the fort he would be fired out by the ships."¹ Clive declined to give up command, and refused to be answerable for the consequences. Matters were compromised by the Admiral coming ashore in person to assume command, whereupon Clive handed him the keys of the fort to be delivered to the former governor, Drake; the very man who had run away from it seven months before.

The breach between Clive and Watson was soon healed. On March 18th they captured the French settlement of Chandernagore; and on June 22nd Admiral Watson and a naval brigade of fifty seamen took part in the victory of Plassey. On August 16th Admiral Watson died of fever; and Pocock, now Vice-admiral of the Red, succeeded to the naval command.

George Pocock was then in his fifty-second year. Nephew of Sir George Byng, created Viscount Torrington for his victory over Castaneta's fleet at Cape Passaro, and cousin of Admiral John Byng, shot on board the *MONARCH* at Portsmouth for the loss of Minorca, he was related to the most successful and the most unfortunate admirals of his time. John Byng was executed on March 14th, 1757: it may even be that the news had not been received in India when

¹ ECHOES FROM OLD CALCUTTA, by H. E. Busteed; p. 31.

Pocock succeeded to the command; but if he did not know it then, the ill news could not have been long delayed, and it was scarcely of a character to induce him to run any risks in order to defeat the French. When an admiral was liable to be shot for a blunder on the one hand, beside being hampered by the fighting-orders on the other, the safe game was the only game to play; yet in war there can be no great successes without great risks, and therefore Pocock, unwilling to run the risks, never gained the successes.

The French were keenly conscious of the importance of the great struggle for supremacy in India. General Lally, Baron and Count de Tollendal, the Irish adventurer who was now sent out to take the chief command, was an officer of higher rank and greater reputation than any who preceded him on that service. His policy was simple; it was, he said, comprised in five decisive words, *Plus d'Anglais dans la Péninsule*. Had D'Aché been more enterprising, or George Pocock less dogged, he might have carried out his simple programme; but when he landed at Pondicherry in 1758 he found Chandernagore already lost and everything in confusion. With two battalions of his own regiment, two of the regiment of Lorraine under Count d'Estaing, and a swarm of native auxiliaries, he invested Fort St. David, (then the most important station held by the British) and sent orders to D'Aché to meet him there. On April 28th D'Aché sailed into the roads of Fort St. David and found there two small English ships, the TRITON and BRIDGE-WATER, each of twenty guns. Taken by surprise by eight French line-of-battle-ships, they were run ashore and burned to avoid capture.

Pocock, lying in Madras Roads with three line-of-battle-ships, was

joined on March 24th by Commodore Stevens and four more, and the little fleet sailed at once in search of D'Aché. After running as far south as Negapatam without finding any signs of them, he stood back to St. David's Roads, and on the morning of the 29th the French look-out frigate SYLPHIDE signalled the British fleet in sight. D'Aché at once weighed and stood to the northward, followed by Pocock. Presently D'Aché formed his ships in line of battle, accepting the leeward position according to the usual French practice. Neither of the adversaries had any previous experience in handling fleets in action, though each had served with distinction; but D'Aché was trained in the better school and commanded the stronger force. The two fleets were as follows.

French Line.

ZODIAQUE, 74 (flag).
BIEN AIME, 74.
VENGEANCE, 64.
ST. LOUIS, 64.
DUC D'ORLEANS, 60.
DUC DE BOURGOGNE,
60.
CONDÉ, 50.
MORAS, 50.

British Line.

YARMOUTH, 64 (flag).
CUMBERLAND, 66.
ELIZABETH, 64.
WEYMOUTH, 60.
TIGER, 60.
NEWCASTLE, 50.
SALISBURY, 50.

Pocock formed his line to windward, and bore down to attack after the manner prescribed in the English fighting-instructions. Theoretically, all his ships should have come into action together, each against her opposite in the French line; but as the French continued to move straight ahead, while the British ships steered diagonally to close them, the natural result ensued. The French ships, sailing the shorter and direct line, drew ahead. Pocock's leading ships got into action first, and remained for a considerable time unsupported. Three of his captains, Legge of the NEWCASTLE, Vincent of the WEY-

MOUTH, and Brereton of the CUMBERLAND, either mistook his signals, or were unable, from their position in the line, to get into action. The CUMBERLAND got up too late to be of service; the other two never got up at all.

In spite of the heavy odds against them, Pocock and his four ships stood to it well. The engagement followed the usual course. For two hours the French gunners worked havoc in the English spars and rigging, while the English shot smashed into the French gun-tiers; and when D'Aché was tired of it, he sheered off, but being presently reinforced by the COMTE DE PROVENCE (74) and a frigate from Pondicherry, he formed line again to leeward. Pocock tried to follow him up and recommence the action, but four of his ships were badly damaged and almost unmanageable; so D'Aché hauled to the wind and sailed north to anchor off Alamparva, and there the BIEN AIMÉ drove ashore and was lost.

The British are said to have lost twenty-nine killed and eighty-nine wounded; the reports of the French loss vary from five to nine hundred. As the British fired at the gun-tiers, while the French devoted their attention principally to the rigging (each following their national custom) the French loss would necessarily be heavier than ours; and the disproportion would be increased by the numerical superiority of the French crews which were much stronger than the British.

Pocock in the YARMOUTH had beaten off the ZODIAQUE and BIEN AIMÉ, but had been much damaged. According to one account his fleet, encountering bad weather, was twice driven as far south as Ceylon, but at length he reached Madras, where he refitted his damaged ships. The CUMBERLAND is said to have been so shaken that it was found necessary to

send ten of her guns ashore, because she was no longer strong enough to carry them; as she could not have suffered in the action, she had probably been strained in the gale. Another unpleasant duty had to be performed; the courts-martial, which seem to have been the usual sequel to naval actions of that time, were duly held. Legge was cashiered, Vincent and Brereton dismissed their ships; but Brereton was immediately appointed to the SALISBURY. It is at least possible that their failure to get into action was due as much to inability as to any misconduct on their part; for the faulty English tactics made it extremely difficult for the rearmost ships in the line to get into their station.

Once more ready for sea, Pocock went out to look for D'Aché, and on May 30th discovered him in Pondicherry. So soon as he appeared in sight, Lally ordered D'Aché to put to sea and engage him. The French admiral came out, but instead of attacking Pocock, he proceeded to manœuvre in the direction of Fort St. David, and after a decent interval returned to Pondicherry without having done anything, reporting that he had offered battle, and the British had declined to accept. Probably both admirals failed to obtain the position they wanted, and were unwilling to attack until they got it. Two days later Fort St. David, the strongest fortress of the English East India Company, capitulated.

The two fleets did not meet again till July 26th. Again Pocock found D'Aché at Pondicherry, and from July 27th till August 3rd he manœuvred patiently, as he had been taught, trying to get to windward of the elusive D'Aché. It is not stated whether he ultimately attained his object by skill and sailing, or if it was given to him by a shift of the

wind. However that may have been, he got it, and proceeded to make excellent use of it. His line was formed with scrupulous precision, even to the extent of making the ELIZABETH and TIGER change places, so that they might find themselves matched equally with their opposites in the French line. When once the preliminaries were arranged to Pocock's academical satisfaction the real fighting power of the man had a chance. The action commenced about one in the afternoon. At the end of fifteen minutes, the ZODIAQUE and COMTE DE PROVENCE were both on fire and fell out of the line. The French complained that combustibles had been thrown on board their ships, and it was not fair fighting. It is difficult for us in these days to appreciate such nice ethical distinctions; but a similar accusation was brought against us after the battle of the Nile. In that case it was proved that the immoral missiles had come from the magazine of the French SPARTIATE, and that they were usually supplied to all French ships.

Seeing the flag-ship leave the line of battle, the rest of the French fleet made the best of their way out of action, and a running fight ensued. The French ships cut away their boats and crowding all sail escaped to Pondicherry, Pocock all the time in hot chase of them. D'Aché's ships had been so roughly handled that he sailed early in September for the Isle of Bourbon (Réunion), to refit, leaving Pocock, whose fleet had always been inferior to the French in number of ships and men, as well as in weight of metal, supreme in East Indian waters.

At the end of the year the British fleet was despatched to Bombay to bring reinforcements to Madras, which Lally was besieging with every man and every gun he could collect.

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Had D'Aché's fleet been at sea, Pocock's task might easily have been made impossible, Madras might have fallen, and with it our Indian empire; but D'Aché was refitting his ships two thousand miles away. When Pocock arrived with reinforcements on February 16th, 1759, Lally hastily raised the siege and made the best of his way to Arcot, leaving fifty-two guns and most of his ammunition behind him.

The French strained every nerve to enable D'Aché to bring an overwhelming force against his hard-hitting enemy. With eleven sail of the line (the strongest fleet that had ever sailed the Indian seas) he appeared on September 2nd off Negapatam, where Pocock, reinforced by the GRAFTON (70) and the SUNDERLAND (60), was lying at anchor. Pocock immediately weighed with his nine ships, and signalled for a general chase, but the wind fell and he could not get within range. Next morning the French fleet was seen in line on the starboard tack, four leagues away to leeward, eleven sail of the line beside frigates and store-ships, carrying beside their own crews a number of troops for Pondicherry. According to the statement in Campbell's *LIVES OF THE ADMIRALS*, they had a superiority of one hundred and ninety-two guns and twenty-three hundred men.

Pocock, as usual, bore down to engage, but the enemy kept away till nightfall, when they wore ship and formed line on the opposite tack. Fearing to lose sight of them in the night, he steered to cut them off from Pondicherry, their port. It was not till a week later that he got in touch with them, in line on the starboard tack, eight miles to leeward. At ten o'clock they wore on to the larboard tack and steered a lasking course, that is to say, they kept the wind on

the larboard quarter. Then Pocock ran down into action. Had he held right on, broken through their line, and engaged to leeward, he might have gained a great victory; but, true to the vicious system in which he had been trained, he hauled to the wind so soon as he got within point-blank range, and matched his nine ships against D'Aché's eleven, broadside to broadside. D'Aché was a better tactician. When he saw the English line extended to cover the longer line of the French, he concentrated his fire on the seven leading ships, cutting off the *SUNDERLAND* and *WEYMOUTH* which were last in the line. It is difficult to follow the very vague descriptions of the naval historians, but according to a contemporary account in *THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE*, he appears to have actually cut the British line in two. All accounts agree that the two rear-ships were shut out of the action for a considerable time; but though he could and did out-maneuvre Pocock, he could not out-fight him. The English were better gunners than the French, and whatever their fleet-tactics may have been, the individual ships were certainly fought well. In compliance with the code of naval etiquette, Pocock in the *YARMOUTH* engaged D'Aché in the *ZODIAQUE*, flag-ship to flag-ship, while Rear-Admiral Stevens in the *GRAFTON*, assisted by the *TIGER* and *NEWCASTLE*, hammered the *ST. LOUIS*, *DUC D'ORLEANS*, and *MINOTAUR*. The little fifty-gun ship, *SALISBURY*, had the *ILLUSTRE* of sixty-four guns, all to herself, and kept her busy till the two rear-ships, the *SUNDERLAND* and *WEYMOUTH*, broke into the *mêlée*, and drove the *ILLUSTRE* out of action. The burden which had lain so heavily on Pocock's spirit was lifted when his cherished line of battle was shattered in the first shock of the engagement. Free to fight as he would, he showed

himself for what he was, a hard hitter of the old fashion, and this, his last action with D'Aché, was by far the best of the three. For nearly six hours the hard pounding went on, till D'Aché bore up and ran down to leeward with more than a thousand dead or wounded men on board his battered ships, leaving Pocock's ships half unrigged, and unable to follow up their advantage. The British loss amounted to one hundred and eighty-four killed and three hundred and eighty-five wounded; the *TIGER*, commanded by Captain Brereton (who had been dismissed the *CUMBERLAND* after the action of April 29th), greatly distinguished herself, losing more men than any other British ship. Both admirals claimed a victory; but on October 3rd, so soon as he had refitted his damaged ships, Pocock led them into the roadstead of Pondicherry, where the French fleet was lying under the guns of the fort, formed his line in front of them, and offered battle. D'Aché weighed and stood out as if to engage, but without firing a shot he slipped away south, and, outsailing Pocock, disappeared in the night and made his way back to Réunion. The monsoon was coming on, and there were heavy repairs needed in Pocock's fleet; he sailed, therefore, for Bombay, and on October 19th he fell in with Admiral Cornish and four sail of the line. Thus reinforced, he held absolute command of the sea, and Lally shut himself up in Pondicherry. It was well for him, as it is for all men, that he had no foreknowledge of the few and bitter years that lay before him; but his evil destiny marched apace. Three months later he was utterly defeated by Eyre Coote at Wandewash; another year, and he had surrendered Pondicherry. Five years after that, he learned that the Bastille and the scaffold were all the reward that

France had to bestow upon a brave man who had failed.

Throughout the whole of these operations Pocock never once gained a decisive success. Tactically D'Aché always secured an advantage, though he never availed himself of it. The French historians admit that nearly all the actions in which he commanded had an unfortunate termination; and though he was never actually defeated, though he never lost a ship in action, yet in a few months he lost every station that France possessed on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, and allowed the trade of the *Compagnie des Indes*, which rivalled that of our own East India Company, to be almost destroyed. George Pocock had little skill in naval tactics, but he could fight, and his gunners were well-trained; it was his steady determination, and the straight shooting of his crews that made the conquest of India possible.

There is a passage in Campbell's *LIVES OF THE ADMIRALS* which is curiously indicative of the utter misconception of the principles of naval warfare which prevailed before 1782. He sums up his account of Pocock's operations in the East Indies thus:

Admiral Pocock more than once compelled Mr. D'Aché, the greatest admiral that France could boast of, who alone supported the declining reputation of her marine, to take shelter under the walls of Pondicherry. Pocock had reduced the French ships to a very shattered condition, and killed a great many of their men; but, what shews the singular talents of both admirals, they had fought three pitched battles in eighteen months without the loss of a ship on either side.

Compare this with the picture of Blake in Clarendon's *HISTORY OF THE REBELLION*:

He was the first man that declined the old tract . . . and despised those

rules which had been long in practice, to keep his ship and men out of danger, which had been held in former times a proof of great ability and circumspection, as if the principal art requisite in the captain of a ship had been to be sure to come home safe again.

Nelson declared that he was always ready to lose half his own fleet to ensure the destruction of the French; but Blake and Nelson were giants who made the times in which they lived heroic. Pocock, born in a meaner age, was but a pigmy beside them; yet he played no small or unworthy part in the great drama of Indian conquest.

There have been many periods in the history of the navy which are pleasanter to remember, and more grateful to write of, than this; but it has one deep and abiding interest. Feeble and indecisive as these actions of Pocock's were, they made the work of Clive possible. Though he never won a battle, yet he retained sufficient command of the sea, against a superior force, to hamper Lally's operations by cutting off his supplies and bringing up our reinforcements. Had Pocock been defeated, Madras must have fallen, and it is unlikely that the East India Company would have recovered from the blow. And one thing more, — though Pocock was invariably out-maneuvred and over-matched, yet his indomitable fighting spirit pulled him through. Though governments were spiritless and admirals ill-taught, officers and men alike seem to have done their duty throughout these, the last days of our ill-success, as faithfully and cheerfully as they have ever done it when they had learned to look on victory as a foregone conclusion. These are the reasons which make the three battles of Pocock and D'Aché worth remembering.

W. J. FLETCHER.

EDWARD FITZGERALD AND T. E. BROWN.

IN reading the letters of Thomas Edward Brown,—differing from all others as the man was different from all other men—one is curiously reminded, as much by contrast as by resemblance, of Edward FitzGerald.

The one was a Celt, feeling intensely, passionate in his love of beauty, and brimming over with delicate fancy; the other was a Saxon, equable, reticent, and almost phlegmatic. The one was optimistic and buoyant with large hope; he had found "the key to all the mysteries." The other moved in the twilight of doubt, groping around the door to which he found no key. One laughed his mirthful laughter; the other smiled serenely, tenderly. Brown loved mankind with a love that came near to genius; he poured sunshine upon his friends, making one apprehend sadly what the silence must now mean to them. FitzGerald too loved his friends; but it was as impossible for him to live with them, as it was for Brown to live without them, and many a time did he return from town without having mustered up courage enough to knock at their doors. Brown might be likened to a St. Francis of the nineteenth century, loving with joyfulness the beauty around him, and seeing God in it all, while FitzGerald seemed to be always wrapped round in an Omarian mantle of gentle fatalism.

And yet, in spite of fundamentally different temperaments and with an entirely individual way of approaching things, these two men had a

strange similarity of tastes and pursuits. One is tempted to feel that beneath the superficial differences one golden thread linked them. What was it?

Both were endowed with a far-reaching sympathy, which made them, each in his own way, the centre of a group of adoring friends. Both had the power of retaining life-long friendships, and both were loved by their friends with a love "passing the love of women." Thackeray was once asked which of his friends he loved best; "Why old Fitz, of course," was the ready answer; and who has not been touched and thrilled by the tributes of love and gratitude paid to the large-hearted Manxman? In both men there was a vein of delicate whimsical humour,—the humour which has been so happily described as wit hand in hand with love, and which leaves behind it a fragrant essence of a man's personality.

Brown felt all the charm of FitzGerald's letters. "There is an ἡθος in FitzGerald's letters," he wrote, "which is so exquisitely idyllic as to be almost heavenly. He takes you with him, exactly accommodating his pace to yours, walks through meadows so tranquil and yet abounding in the most delicate surprises, and these surprises seem so familiar, just as if they had originated with yourself. What delicious blending! What a perfect interweave of thought and diction! What a sweet companion!" And again: "Blessings on FitzGerald! How delightful he was! How he comforted me! I have now finished him. That is the worst of it." Is

not that what we all echo about his own charming letters, which we have laid down so regretfully? The well-loved voice is silent; *that is the worst of it.*

It is not, however, a resemblance in the style of their letters that strikes one. In his introduction Mr. Irwin rightly points out that the letters of Brown cannot be compared to those of FitzGerald, that each has his own qualities, and that the former has nothing of the carelessness which so charms us in the latter. But let us look into the intellectual pleasures and affirmations of these two differently tuned natures. Both were scholars in the widest sense, and both scorned scholarship for its own sake. "By becoming scholars (Heaven save the mark!)" says Brown, "we have gained something; but we have lost, I had almost said, everything." The other sighs: "I find the disadvantage of being so ill-grounded and so bad a scholar. But what does all this signify? Time goes on and we get older, and whether my idleness comprehends the distinction of the first and second aorist will not be noted much in the Book of Life, either on this or on the other side of the leaf." Yet both had that large assimilative passion for the Classics, "the old men who are full-orbed, serene, fixed in their everlasting seats." Both steeped themselves in the rich-sounding Greek language, and both, with spontaneous pleasure and without a touch of pedantry, often made use of its expressive words. For both Greek put forth "a branch-work" extending to the "vista opening far and wide." Both absorbed the essence of Greek thought and life. Speaking on some point about the teaching of Greek, Brown says: "To me the *learning* of any blessed thing is a matter of little moment. Greek is not *learned* by

nineteen-twentieths of our Public School boys. But it is a baptism into a cult, a faith, not more irrational than other faiths or cults; the baptism of a regeneration which releases us from I know not what original sin. And if a man does not see that, he is a fool, such a fool that I shouldn't wonder if he gravely asked me to explain what I mean by original sin in such a connexion." Here again, is a characteristic sentence from FitzGerald. "It is wonderful how the sea brought up this appetite for Greek. It likes to be called *θάλασσα* and *πόντος* better than that wretched word 'sea' I am sure, and the Greeks (especially Æschylus, after Homer,) are full of sea-faring sounds and allusions. I think the murmurs of the Ægean (if that is their sea) wrought itself into their language. How is it that the Islandic (which I read is our mother tongue) was not more Poluphloisboi-ic?"

Both returned over and over again to the ancient authors. FitzGerald sobbed over Sophocles. Brown declared that the tremendous parabasis, "*Ἀγε δὴ φύσιν ἀνδρες ἀμανρόβιοι,*" from THE BIRDS of Aristophanes made him tremble. To both Homer was a source of delight. "Sophocles has almost shaken my allegiance to Æschylus," cries FitzGerald. "Oh, these two Œdipuses! but then that Agamemnon! Well, one shall be the Handel, t'other the Haydn, one the Michel Angelo and t'other the Raffaele of Tragedy." And again: "Sophocles is a pure Greek temple; but Æschylus is a rugged mountain, lashed by seas and riven by thunderbolts; and which is the most wonderful and appalling? Or if one will have Æschylus too a work of man, I say he is like a Gothic cathedral, which the Germans say did arise from the genius of man aspiring up to the immeasurable, and reaching after the

infinite in complexity and gloom, according as Christianity elevated and widened men's minds. A dozen lines of Æschylus have a more almighty power on me than all Sophocles's plays; though I would perhaps rather save Sophocles, as the consummation of Greek art, than Æschylus's twelve lines, if it came to a choice which must be lost. Besides these Æschyluses *trouble* us with their grandeur and gloom; but Sophocles is always soothing, complete, and satisfactory."

Both felt the power of Dante; both acknowledged their awe of him and turned with relief the one to Ariosto, the other to the "ever-green" Boccaccio. "Dante is monotonous," says Brown, "but what a monotone! He drowns you in a dream and you never want to wake." His fine quatrain on Dante and Ariosto is a perfect criticism in miniature on the two men.

If Dante breathes on me his awful
breath
I rise and go; but I am sad as death—
I go—but turning, who is that I see?
I whisper:—*Ariosto, wait for me!*

FitzGerald places Dante "apart in the Empyrean," but for "human delight" he demands Boccaccio. He would have appreciated Brown's sonnet on Boccaccio.

To both Walter Scott was supreme. "I have been reading Sir Walter's *PIRATE* again," says FitzGerald, "and am very glad to find how much I like it—that is speaking far below the mark—I may say how I wonder and delight in it . . . with all its faults of detail, often mere carelessness, what broad Shakespearian daylight over it all, and all with no effort and,—a lot else that one may be contented to feel without having to write an essay about." And again: "They won't beat Sir Walter

in a hurry. He will fly over their heads *come aquila* still!" Brown, in a characteristic burst, exclaims: "The great discovery, or rather re-discovery has been Scott. I have read *WAVERLEY*, *OLD MORTALITY*, *WOODSTOCK*, *REDGAUNTLET*, *THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR*, *ROB ROY*, and am now reading *QUENTIN DURWARD*. They quite spring on me, these old darlings. What a man! I am full of 'wonder, love, and praise'; I seem to see all manner of great and good things; but the main thing is,—the joy and glory of it all is,—what I suppose the French mean by *verve*, at any rate, what I understand by that favourite term of French criticism." And he adds humorously, with reference to an attack on Stevenson: "These fellows are drawing nigh to the very sanctities—the cry will soon be, perhaps already is, 'The ark of Scott is taken'; if so, I shall be a broken-hearted old Eli."

Both Brown and FitzGerald were enthusiastic over Burns. "That red, red Rose has burnt itself into my silly old soul," cries FitzGerald. "Burns is a blackbird and mimics nothing," says the other. "He is inevitable." Curiously enough they both compare the passionate lyrical outbursts of Burns with more artistic work,—FitzGerald with Béranger, Brown with Tennyson—and both have to admit that the song of the artist in its self-consciousness loses something of pure lyrical passion. With what relish and keen appreciation did they both return again and again to Milton, and to Cowley and Addison ("how delicious he is!") and Sir Thomas Browne, who was sometimes, to his namesake's mind, *Absolute*. Every reader of FitzGerald remembers his love, his old ever-new love for Crabbe; Crabbe's son was his friend. He edits Crabbe's *TALES*

FROM THE HALL. Crabbe is his "great gun," his "eternal Crabbe." The author of *Fo'c's'le YARNS* was as appreciative of the poet as his earlier champion could desire, and FitzGerald would have twinkled over the exuberant aside with which the name is heralded: "By the bye, do you think of him as Crabbe fish or Crabbe apple?" He advises his friend to read everything FitzGerald has said "about his beloved old crustacean," and calls himself "an old Crabbian."

It is not in literature only that their tastes coincided. Both had a passion for music; both were completely happy when they were in possession of a piano or an organ. We can fancy Brown bringing music even out of an "old tub of a piano"; and who does not recall FitzGerald and the parson's son and daughter, "with not a voice amongst them," going through Handel's Coronation Anthems? The letters of both are full of allusions to the pleasure of playing and composing, and both give interesting criticisms, Brown's abstract and poetically conceived, FitzGerald's more concrete and pictorial. In music too their affections were set on the Classics; on Beethoven and Bach and Mozart and Handel. "Mozart is the purest musician," says FitzGerald. "Beethoven would have been poet or painter as well."

For both men the sea had an abiding soul-satisfying charm. What a marvellous description we have of a storm in Brown's *CHRISTMAS ROSE*, and in *THE BRISTOL CHANNEL*! Brown is constantly walking by "his old chum," and bathing in its blue depth and singing peons to its ever-changing beauty. "I have gone back to singing," he says in one of his letters, "a vice of my youth. I always think the sea the great

challenger and promoter of song. Even the mountain is not the same thing. There may always be some d—d fool or another behind a rock. But the sea is open and you can tell when you are alone and the dear old chap is so confidential; I will trust him with my secret." There is hardly a letter of FitzGerald's which does not make allusion to it; "That old sea" was always talking to him, telling its ancient history. For both men this love meant enjoyment in boating and bathing. FitzGerald was continually on board his little lugger even when it was drizzling, or he was "perishing with a N. E. wind," and was never happier than when sailing her. Brown revelled in the crossings and in the excursions round the coast of his darling Mona. And then there was for both the blessed intercourse with the fisherfolk; for it is strange that the shy Suffolk Sage was as much beloved by them as was the genial Manxman. Both could enter into the lives of their humble friends. Mr. Hindes Groome, in his Memorial of FitzGerald, gives a charming picture of him and his friendship for "Posh." Posh was the skipper of his lugger, or rather the lugger shared by them—the *Meum* and *Tuum*—usually called, to FitzGerald's intense delight, the Mum and Tum. He enjoyed the companionship of this old salt as much as Brown enjoyed Tommy the mate and his friends. The letters abound in such allusions to him as these: "I believe I have smoked my pipe every day but one with Posh at his house, which his quiet little wife keeps tidy and pleasant. The Man is, I do think, of a royal nature." "I have just left Posh, having caught him with a pot of white paint (some of which was on his face) and having made him dine on cold beef in the Suffolk Hotel Bowling Green,

washing all down with two tankards of Bullard's ale. He was not displeased to dine abroad, as this is Saturday, when he says there are apt to be 'squalls' at home, because of washing, etc." On one occasion, having been obliged to remonstrate with Posh on his behaviour, he wrote: "It makes me sad and ashamed to be setting up for judge on a much nobler creature than myself." In all this the man whom some have called a misanthrope (as Cowell says he was only in the abstract, having the tenderest love for the human beings near him), showed as much sympathy for his humble friends as did Brown for his.

Both men, again, had in a marked degree that instinct which can only be described by the Scotch word *yird-hunger*,—the longing to go back to the land of their early days, the land of sweet associations. Brown always sighed for the mountains, the beautiful glens, the bog-bean-scented *curraghs* of his beloved isle, and Fitzgerald was unhappy away from the soft verdant landscape of Suffolk. Both were jealous, in the best sense of the word, of the dear home-

country; both wished to keep the ancient simple manners, to gather the lore and traditions and to preserve the rapidly disappearing dialect. Fitzgerald wrote several papers on the Suffolk dialect and sea-phrases for the *EAST ANGLIAN NOTES AND QUERIES*, and Brown has preserved for us the manners and expressions of his "darling race, the warm-hearted, humourous, loving Manx folk." He was indeed a true son of his own people.

One more resemblance is to be noted. The deep love for Nature, for spring-time, for children, for birds, for all creatures. The scent of cowslips and primroses blows over their pages. For both the yellow crocuses "spring like tongues of living fire." The blackbird,

The lusty bird, whose throat was clear
And strong with elemental cheer,

sings hopefully for the one, the nightingale pensively for the other. Both had the poet's eye and ear for all the fairest sights and sounds of life, and the tender heart for human suffering. And therefore both suffered much themselves.

JACK'S MOTHER.

For twelve long years Jack Wilmoughby had sat on the same stool, in the same office, plodding through the same uninteresting work,—work in which lurked absolutely no suggestions, which ran always on the same level, and led ever into itself again. The suggestions, thoughts, and fancies found in, or springing from, work on a higher intellectual plane, also lead ever into themselves again; and the ground over which they pass may become as deadly monotonous, to a man of Jack's temperament, as teaching village children the alphabet, or preparing the *Answers to Correspondents*, for AUNT SUSANNA'S SUNDAY MAGAZINE, would be. Yet, being assured that the flight of the sea-gull and the progress of the slug would eventually prove equally wearisome, who would not choose the sea-gull's flight?

By nature Jack was a dreamer, an artist, a poet. Now there are artists who mix their colours with their own heart's blood; and there are poets who fling their bitterest pangs (and also the bitterest pangs of their friends) into verse. But Jack would never have been one of these; rather he would have found his place among those who touch only the pathos and the most delicate humour of life, singing us sweet and tender songs, and setting forth bright idylls of nature. For he loved all that was tranquil and fair; the golden green of a beech-wood, beneath the pale blue sky of an early spring-day, filled his heart with a deep peace. He was one of those (not many, in these latter days) who believe that the deeper and the

finer issues of life can only be reached through things purely beautiful; and at times he well-nigh touched despair, because he thought he might never take even the first step towards the goal where he fain would be. So might a child, hurrying homewards, cry bitterly because it had lost its way.

There was nothing beautiful in his life, Jack would have said; only a sordid monotony which crushed all vitality out of him, and against which his eager spirit could make no stand; with brief and rare intervals of rest, lovely indeed, but over before he had fairly got his breath.

Had he been independent of work, Jack would have loitered through life, interested, alert, and most intensely receptive; and the inevitable reactions to weariness, due to the strain of melancholy in his character, would have been but the necessary shadows among the bright and delicate colouring of the whole. He would also, in all probability, have found himself able to considerably augment his income from time to time, with no more than a wholly pleasurable effort. Whoso hath, to him shall be given. Had he stood alone, and taken his own way in the world, office-walls would never have held him; but what would have become of him is problematic. A man of intellectual tastes, who yet will dream away his yearly holiday (of a fortnight's duration) in one little West Country village, instead of making a wild rush on the Continent, crowding as much as possible into the cruelly short time, is a man whose capabilities it would take some insight to gauge.

Jack loathed the office. A little devil dwelt there, flourishing exceedingly (as little devils do in this little world), who was for ever whispering in his ear, "Cut it, cut it, *cut* it, you fool." That was the text, to be followed up by plans for the fool's method of procedure, when he had cut it. These were varied. There were hopeful plans, and desperate plans; plans heroic, and plans cowardly; wise plans, and plans hopelessly foolish; plans which opened such a vista of golden days, when a man should be his own master, and take his will of the bounties which God pours for us into the lap of His handmaid, and hear his fill of that which he tells us through His mouthpiece, Nature, that Jack had to set his teeth, and write, write, write, while the little devil capered with glee in a corner.

"While the Mother lives, I run no risks," Jack would say to himself. "Thank Heaven, she does not guess how nearly mad it sends me!"

Hour after hour, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, there he sat, and wrote, wrote, wrote. While spring was setting her foot-prints on bank and meadow and moor, passing her hand over the hedges, and swinging, singing, in the trees; while cliff and headland and hill, and the great sweep of the great sea lay beautiful and calm beneath the April sky, and his soul was sick with longing for the Mighty Mother; when summer burst into throbbing life; when autumn flung her rich and marvellous mantle over the wolds; when winter tantalised men with swift change from dazzling purity to sullen, yet so restful, grey,—Jack sat ever in the office, and wrote, wrote, wrote.

At one time he gave up his excursions into the country on Saturday afternoons; perhaps on the principle which will make men give up smoking

altogether, rather than restrict themselves to one pipe a day; or more likely because, as the years went on, Saturday afternoons found him so weary,—fagged out, he called it. Sundays he had rarely, very rarely, taken for himself at all. "If you do make a lay-figure of your life," said he "you may as well put on its rouge. So he stayed at home and took his mother to church, in all her Sunday glory of silken gown and a wondrous bonnet, compared to which her weekday head-gear was as moonlight unto sunlight; and he would even, occasionally, set the finishing touch to his conduct by appearing at her select little seventh-day tea-party,—a most orthodox figure, in regulation Sunday attire, but with a lack of expression in his brown eyes which called forth many unfavourable comments. He was not a favourite with his mother's friends.

"Jack," said Mrs. Willoughby, with an obvious effort after pride, "is the best son in the world. Of course, I am aware that he does not shine. Mrs. Taylor's second son has written a novel which Beatrice Taylor describes (very improperly) as a shilling shocker. It has had a great success, and his family is in-ord-in-ately proud of him." The little woman always tripped over a long word with the most dainty care, even as a dainty maiden trips over a narrow bridge. "Well, no doubt it would be gratifying to any mother! But *I* am quite content, with my kind, stay-at-home son." And, on the rare occasions when Jack had not made good his escape at the beginning of this sort of speech, she would put out a tiny hand, well-kept in spite of all the work it had done, and still did, and pat his arm in an encouraging manner.

She certainly did not consider herself dull. Do any of us know, when we are spiritually hard of hearing?

She was a talkative and sociable little woman, who prided herself on a rare combination of all the virtues. Was there a better housekeeper to be found? Did any one of Jack's fellow-clerks ever eat a better dinner at home than he did every day of his life? Yet who was more economical than she? And was she not also well-read, and able to talk on many subjects? On what subject indeed will a woman of her stamp *not* talk! And did she ever trouble Jack with domestic worries, as Mrs. Smith was always troubling that poor unfortunate Mr. Smith? And did she not properly appreciate, and acknowledge, Jack's unflinching goodness and courtesy to herself? And had he the faintest idea that she sometimes almost wished that he had been a more *striking* man?

She thought he had not; but it was a subject over which Jack had many a grim little laugh. "The Mother would like me to write an idiotic novel, or to do something else equally unholy," he would say to himself; "and I,—I only want to think my own thoughts, and live my own life, instead of dying a daily death in that cursed office."

Of the longings, the unquenchable desire for freedom, the mad impatience which sometimes seemed as though it must break all bounds, she knew and guessed nothing. He went from her morning after morning, with a bright good-bye, and re-appeared in the evening, tired, it is true, but usually with a good appetite, and always courteous and ready for conversation. He told her sometimes that he had a headache; but he never told her that he was seldom without one.

"The best son in the world," she truly said; but no one knew less than she how good. She could not have grasped,—nay, she could have laid no hand upon the sense of the deadly

grind, the daily treadmill, which seemed now to numb, and now to madden him; so that the best which ever happened was that now and then he lived through one supreme moment which held the concentrated bitterness of months; for he refound himself, listless and apathetic, and felt nothing for many a long day after. You cannot eat your cake and have it.

"Always the same," Jack's mother said he was; and so indeed he was, to her. "A moody beggar," his acquaintances called him; and so indeed he was, to them. What he would have been, had he lived with the Mighty Mother whom he loved who can say? Her hand was on his heart-strings, day and night. At times, a sudden memory of her calm, of her witchery, of her grandeur, of her loveliness, of her music,—or even of her enthralling incomprehensibility, at moments when she has nothing but her wonderful loneliness to offer us, as in the fen-lands of England, or as (though Jack had never seen it there) in leagues upon leagues of flat and barren veldt,—a sudden thought of these things, I say, would sometimes take him by the throat and well-nigh choke him. He longed for her, sea or mountain, fen or moor, what matter? Does a child, sick for its mother, care what will be the fashion of her robes, when she comes, singing the lullaby it longs for, once more?

So with ailing brain and longing soul Jack sat in the office, and wrote, wrote, wrote, through weary morning and wearier afternoon, month after month, year after year.

Once he spoke to his mother of moving to some little town, if he could get work in such a one; some place set in the real country, he said, and from which one got fairly away in three minutes' run. There was no

wistfulness in his voice, nor were there ever any tears in his eyes ; but the bitterest tears are those that are never shed.

His little mother was aghast at this proposition, and talked against it, with her usual correct volubility, for some small space of time. What she said was really eminently sensible, but not therefore particularly worth listening to. Then she came to the point, though she hardly considered it as such.

"As to getting into the country, my dearest boy," said she in her little tinkling voice, "I did not know you cared much about that. Why, you absolutely refused to go to the Spencer's picnic last week ! If it is really such an object with you, surely, as it is, you could manage it a little oftener,—if you only had a little more energy, my dear !"

"I have no energy at all, Mother," Jack said quietly ; he thought of the grave, where what little energy he ever had lay buried.

"Well, it often seems to me that your work *does* absorb all your faculties," returned his mother ; "and it is, no doubt, a good thing that it should be so." There was just the suspicion of a sigh in her thin voice, and Jack knew that she was thinking of that book, so improperly designated a shilling shocker, which somebody else's son had written. But she was getting away from his subject, and he gently brought her back to it. "You would really dislike such a plan, then ?" he asked.

"Dislike it ? Well, yes ; but do not think that that is the question. Have you ever known me to put forward my own likes and dislikes ? It is that it would be so bad for you, Jack. And pray, how would you be likely to get anything good enough, leaving the firm which knows you ?"

"Oh, of course, I know it all

hangs on an *if*," said Jack abstractedly ; "still I think that Mr. Powell could and would help me."

Then did little Mrs. Willoughby become seriously alarmed. She was a thorough cockney, with all a cockney's genuine horror of provincial life ; and the madness of Jack's idea of leaving the people for whom he had worked so many years, and who must surely raise his salary before long, filled her with dismay.

She gathered up all her forces. "Indeed, Jack," she began, with as much solemnity as her small personality could carry, "I know that it would be a *very bad thing* to make any change. Here, we are known ; we are settled ; we have many, many friends by whom we are respected." A procession of his mother's friends, with their endless tittle-tattle, kind or unkind, but tittle-tattle always, passed before Jack's inner eye. "Here at least, in this centre of civilisation, we can feel the throbs of the heart of the world." Mrs. Willoughby paused, as well she might, and gave a positive gasp of delight at her achievement of this sentence, while Jack manfully repressed a desire to giggle. "And then, my dear Jack," the little tinkling voice went on, with maternal playfulness, "I really do tremble to think what you would become in a little dull country town, with no life stirring, and nothing to keep you a little rubbed up ! Even here, with all the quite superior people we see, your,—your,—your manners, in short, my dear, are,—are not—"

Jack's mother stopped, having gone further than she intended (as ninety-nine people out of a hundred do when they have once started), and having the grace to feel a little embarrassed ; which feeling, however, was not shared by Jack. Jack's conscience was quite easy respecting his manners to his mother ; it was also quite easy,

though from another point of view, respecting his manners to Miss Effusia Spencer.

"Yes, I know, Mother," he said nonchalantly, with his tired brown eyes, in which the lights and shades were shifting and changing, fixed earnestly on nothing at all. "And if you dislike my idea so much, why we will say no more about it."

Suddenly Jack's mother had an actual qualm of conscience, a thing which had not happened to her since her husband died. The consciences of some people are like the boy in Grimm's Fairy Tales, who did not know how to shiver, until his wife, the Princess taught him with a bucketful

of fish in their native element, applied as he lay warm in bed. "Of course," she said, with a sudden softening of her voice, which came to Jack's heart as showers to a thirsty land, "of course, anything you really wish, I must agree to. You have been a good son to me, Jack; and you must not think that I forget that I am almost entirely dependent on you—"

"Hush, Mother, *hush*," said Jack, reddening. "And as to my plan, it was just a passing thought, and I spoke of it; that was all."

This was not true, but he never spoke of the matter again. And if he had flitted, the probabilities are that the little devil would have flitted too.

AN IDEAL REFORM BILL

Most of us, I suppose, have been ambitious to set the world right at least once or twice in our lives; and I frankly confess that on more than one occasion I have felt confident that, if the opportunity were only given to me, I could improve upon the bungling work of some of our politicians. Revived by all I had been reading and hearing, in the newspapers and elsewhere, about the late General Election, some such notion as this had no doubt been simmering in my mind the other night when I fell asleep and dreamed a dream, in which the idea worked itself out in the following fantastic fashion.

Lord Salisbury, having heard from a friend that I had meditated long upon problems of government, and that I had written a considerable work dealing with property as the foundation of civilised order, and having moreover read that work on the recommendation of the friend aforesaid, invited me to call upon him. He received me most cordially, and declaring himself to have been deeply impressed by the arguments and facts set forth in my book, expressed an anxiety to learn my views as to the possibility of checkmating our modern demagogues in their design to use the political power of the masses to destroy the foundations of the State, or, in other words, to stem the tide of democratic socialism which is now rising so high and swelling so widely. He was good enough to say that I had evidently studied these matters long and deeply, and that I might therefore be considered an expert upon them; and for his own part he

was not ashamed to say that he had learned a great deal from me and might yet learn a great deal more. Even Ministers of State did not know everything and could not possess all the wisdom in the world; and he regarded it as his first duty to the Sovereign and the country to avail himself of any and every means of obtaining knowledge on the most difficult and responsible work of governing the Kingdom and the Empire. Her Majesty had been of late, he told me, much occupied with these matters, and she had charged him as her Chief Minister to look closely and deeply into them, and to report to her as to what could and should be done. He, for his part, could think of no better expedient than to consult me; and finally he requested me to favour him with my written views on the nature and effect of the legislation of the last fifty years, and in what directions and to what degree it ought to be, or could be, modified.

There's for you! Think of a Prime Minister consulting an author upon the work of governing the country? Is it not deliciously absurd? But you will remember, of course, that this is only a dream.

Thus inspired and fortified I set to work, and in the course of a few days drew up a brand-new Reform Bill, which I then submitted to his lordship; and now submit to you.

Whereas sundry laws have of late years been passed for extending the political freedom of the citizens, placing the institutions of the Kingdom on a broader basis, and pro-

moting the good government of the country generally :

And whereas divers political agitators and seditious societies have taken advantage of the said laws to disaffect the minds of peaceable citizens, stir up discontent, subvert lawful authority, and overthrow the institutions of this Kingdom :

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen, the Lords Temporal and Spiritual, and the Commons House of Parliament, as follows :

First. This Act shall be entitled an Act for the Better Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Secondly. All previous legislation relating to the election of members of the Legislature is hereby repealed, experience having demonstrated that our people are not yet sufficiently intelligent and sober-minded and patriotic to make a wise use of the powers conferred upon them by that legislation ; and the following laws are hereby ordained to be substituted :

(a) No citizen shall be permitted to vote for the election of a member of the Legislature until he has passed an examination in the history of Great Britain and Ireland and also on current social and political questions, to the satisfaction of a Board of Examiners, which shall consist of six persons, viz., one Graduate of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, one Judge of the High Court, one Minister of Religion, one Banker, one Magistrate, and one Member of the House of Lords ; and such Board shall meet in every district for the examination of those citizens who claim to be qualified to exercise the privilege and the responsibility of the franchise.

(b) Absolute equality shall exist as between rich and poor with regard to the franchise, no man being per-

mitted to vote because he is rich, or being debarred from voting because he is poor ; the only tests of fitness being intellectual and moral. So that the poorest peasant who has educated his mind and disciplined his character may attain to this high privilege ; while the millionaire who is morally debased and intellectually uncultivated will be shut out from it.

(c) A second vote shall be allowed to every citizen who, being duly qualified to give a first vote under sub-section (b), shall possess landed or other property to the value of £1,000 ; a third vote if he possess property worth £4,000 ; a fourth vote if he own property worth £10,000 ; and a fifth vote if his possessions be worth £20,000 ; though no man shall possess more than five votes, however great his wealth. The object of this provision is to secure adequate representation of property ; and justification for it exists in the nature of property, which is vitally bound up with the liberty of the individual and the progress of the State. Where there is no security for property there can be no freedom, no civilisation, no morality, no religion. In safeguarding property the nation preserves its own life.

(d) A second vote shall be allowed to every citizen, who, being duly qualified to vote a first time under sub-section (b), shall follow the avocation of a Minister of Religion, an Author, a Doctor of Medicine, an Architect, an Artist, or a Composer of Music. In the past the representation of the people and the making of our laws have been too exclusively in the hands of those who follow the profession of law, religion, literature, and the fine arts being too much ignored. Yet these latter are at least of equal conse-

quence with law, and it is the purpose of this provision to give them an efficient voice in the framing of legislation.

(e) A citizen who is otherwise duly qualified to vote shall not be disqualified by the fact of his being unmarried; but a citizen who has been married, and a respectable and reputable householder for twenty years, shall in virtue of that fact acquire a second vote. Parents and heads of households constitute the backbone of a nation's strength; they have heavy and peculiar responsibilities, and it is therefore but just that they should be able to exert an effective control over the course of legislation.

(f) A working man who is duly qualified to vote a first time under sub-section (b), shall, if he possess £100 invested in Government bonds of any kind, in virtue of that investment acquire a second vote. The object of this provision is to secure adequate representation of property among the classes who labour for their daily bread, just as the object of sub-section (c) is to secure such representation among the middle and the upper classes.

(g) At intervals of five years the register of voters shall be rigorously revised, and any person who has in the meantime been convicted of felony or misdemeanour or other crime, or who has become notoriously immoral in character, shall be disqualified from voting and struck off the list.

(h) No woman shall vote for the election of any member of Legislature, or any other official whatever, in the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Woman's sphere is the home, where she reigns supreme; the home is the corner-stone of the State; consequently women, in preserving the happiness and purity of the

home, are rendering the Kingdom far higher and nobler service than could be rendered by the exercise of the franchise or by political work in public.

Thirdly. Whereas Labour Combinations of an illegitimate and anti-social character have sprung up of late years, and have taken advantage of the Franchise Laws to bind working men together in Societies, Unions, and Federations, and to induce them to use their votes in order to secure for themselves hours of labour so short and wages so high as to constitute an intolerable burden upon our industries, and to make it impossible for those industries to be carried on with profit to the employers, thus leading to the closing of mines, ironworks, factories, and workshops, and to the enforced idleness of multitudes of workmen, all of which are wrongs and injuries to the community.

Be it therefore enacted that all such Societies, Unions, and Federations shall hereafter be compelled to register and enrol themselves at the Board of Trade, and to submit their rules and laws to the Minister of that Department for approval; and that any such Society, Union, or Federation which shall neglect so to register and enrol itself, or the rules and laws of which shall not be approved by the Minister, shall, in default of such registration and approval, be, in virtue of such default, and without further trial, declared illegal, and shall, if necessary, be forcibly dissolved and suppressed. Provided always that the refusal of the Minister of Industry to sanction the constitution of any such Society, Union, or Federation, shall be subject to an appeal to the Legislature.

Be it also further enacted that any such Society, Union, or Federation, which, having been duly registered

and approved, shall violate its own constitution to the injury of society generally, or shall illegally interfere with an employer's action in the management of his business and deprive him of his lawful freedom, or inflict upon him injury and loss, or shall intimidate a workman from following his lawful occupation and infringe his rights and liberties, shall in virtue of those misdeeds and offences be forcibly dissolved and suppressed as provided in the previous subsection.

Be it also further enacted that every such Society, Union, or Federation shall in law and in fact possess the *status* and be liable to the responsibilities of a corporation, and shall be subject to be sued as a body for the acts of any one of its duly appointed and responsible officials, and that the whole of the funds of such corporation may be sequestered and forfeited in making good the damage done by the acts of the said officials.

Be it also further enacted that in the rules and laws regulating the internal constitution and action of every such Society, Union, or Federation, the following provisions shall be incorporated :

Every member of a Trade Society of ten years' standing or under shall have one vote in its councils ; every member of between ten and twenty years' standing shall have two votes ; every member of twenty-five years' standing shall have three votes, of thirty years' standing four votes, of thirty-five years' standing five votes, and of forty years' standing six votes.

The object of these provisions is to ensure that the older workmen, who are wiser and less liable to be carried away by impulse or caprice than the younger men, and who moreover have heavier responsibilities as heads of

households, shall have the preponderating power in deciding matters which may lead to the loss of their employment and the ruin of their industry.

Fourthly. Any combination of capital shall be lawful which is made for defensive purposes purely. An employer is indubitably entitled to manage his business in his own way so long as he infringes not the liberties or the rights of the workman, nor acts contrary to the interests of the community, and any combination of employers which is necessary in order to enable each individual employer to so manage his business shall be protected and upheld by law and by the forces of the realm.

No combination of capitalists shall be legal unless it is registered and enrolled at the Board of Trade, and its rules and laws have been approved by the Minister of that Department, in the same manner as provided in relation to Workmen's Societies ; and any such Capitalists' Combination which shall neglect so to register itself, or the rules and laws of which shall not be approved by the Minister, shall in default of such registration and approval be in virtue of such default, without further trial, declared illegal, and shall, if necessary, be forcibly dissolved and suppressed. Provided always that the refusal of the Minister of Industry to sanction the Constitution of any such Union or Federation of Capitalists shall be subject to an appeal to the Legislature.

It is hereby enacted that any such Union or Federation of Employers or Capitalists, which, being duly registered and approved, shall violate its own constitution to the injury of the community, or shall illegally interfere with a workman's action in the use or disposal of his labour, or deprive a workman of his lawful freedom or inflict upon him injury

and loss, or shall intimidate a workman from following his lawful occupation and infringe his rights and liberties, shall in virtue of those misdeeds and offences be forcibly dissolved and suppressed, as provided in the case of Workmen's Societies in the like event.

It is further enacted that every Union or Federation of Employers shall in law and in fact possess the *status* and be liable to the responsibilities of a corporation, and shall be subject to be sued as a body for the acts of any one of its duly appointed and responsible officials, and that the whole of the funds of such corporation may be sequestered and forfeited in making good the damage done by the acts of the said officials.

Be it also further enacted that in the rules and laws regulating the internal condition and action of every such society of Capitalists and Employers the following provisions shall be incorporated :

Every member of an Employers' Union or Federation whose business and plant shall be worth £1,000 shall have one vote in its councils ; every member whose business and plant are worth between £1,000 and £5,000 shall have three votes ; and every member whose business and plant are worth £5,000 and upwards shall have six votes.

The object of these provisions is to ensure that the larger employers, who employ many thousands of people and whose industries are of national importance, and who moreover have heavier responsibilities to bear and have larger interests at stake than the smaller employers, and consequently are more likely to take comprehensive and statesmanlike views, shall have the preponderating influence in deciding matters which may lead not only to the wreck of

their own business but to the ruin of a national industry.

It is also hereby enacted that any monopoly for the manufacture or sale of any manufactured article or any natural commodity, except such monopolies as are in themselves natural and unavoidable, shall be illegal. That is to say that any Trust, Syndicate, or other Combination which shall artificially force up the prices of corn, flour, agricultural produce, tea, sugar, coffee, cocoa, iron, wood, copper, coal, cotton, wool, or any other commodity which is essential to the life and happiness of the people generally, or which shall in any way restrain the natural freedom of any trader or merchant to buy or sell such commodities, shall be regarded and treated as *ipso facto* illegitimate and illegal ; and the funds and property of such monopoly shall be forfeited to the State without other inquiry or trial than is necessary to establish the fact that such monopoly is artificial and not natural.

The general aim of these enactments with regard to Capital, Labour, and Trade is to secure to every workman and employer, to every merchant and trader, in this Kingdom, the full enjoyment of the amount of liberty to which he is legitimately entitled according to the ancient laws and traditions of the realm, viz., nothing less than the freedom which may be exercised without infringing upon the freedom of others, or injuring the welfare of the community. Until recently it has been the glory of this Kingdom that every one of its citizens, rich or poor, could exercise and enjoy such liberty ; but recent legislation, and still more the unworthy abuse of it, have seriously tarnished the national honour in this respect. It is hoped that these enactments, which are believed to be grounded in justice and wisdom, will

more than revive the ancient glories of England as the Mother of Freedom.

Fifthly. Whereas a section of the people of this Kingdom, especially in Ireland, have taken advantage of recent Franchise Laws to bind together peasant and other farmers in Agrarian Leagues, with the object of securing to such farmers reductions in or the total abolition of rent, which are inequitable and oppressive to landowners, and inimical to the true interests of the nation :

And whereas such Agrarian Leagues, by instigating plunder and outrage and murder, have intimidated and terrorised the peaceful and law-abiding sections of the community, in order the more readily to attain their dishonest ends :

And whereas, notwithstanding the criminal character and proceedings of these Agrarian Leagues, certain politicians and parties have joined hands with them and have thus secured a majority in the House of Commons, and such majority has then used its power illegitimately to force through legislation on the land-question of an intolerably unjust nature, which has proved a bane to both landlords and tenants, as well as to the Kingdom generally :

Be it therefore enacted that all the land-laws passed in reference to Ireland during the last twenty-five years are hereby repealed, and the old laws for which they were substituted are hereby restored in all their former force and authority ; and all Land Courts and other institutions which have grown up out of these recent laws are hereby disestablished and dissolved, the judges and officials of such Courts and Institutions receiving as compensation for the loss of their offices their full present salaries for five years from the date of the passing of this Act.

Experience has abundantly proved

that agriculture, like trade, can only flourish where freedom of contract prevails, in other words, where landlord and tenant are absolutely free to make whatever arrangements they may agree upon for their mutual interests, unfettered by any legal enactments or any Courts or officials, and where the only province of the law is to see that each party fulfils his part of the contract according to the agreement which he voluntarily made and entered into. The object of this Act is to re-establish that state of things, twenty-five years of bitter and disastrous experience having proved that it never ought to have been departed from.

Sixthly. Whereas recent Franchise Laws have also been perverted by political partisans in order to procure the passing of legislation imposing heavy and onerous duties upon estates when they pass from one owner to another by reason of death, which legislation has fallen with extreme severity upon landowners :

Be it therefore enacted that the whole of such Finance Acts dealing with Death-Duties, Succession-Duties, Probate-Duties, &c., which have been passed since the said Franchise Acts came into force and are based upon them, are hereby abrogated, together with the said Franchise Acts ; and further that the Acts which regulated these matters of finance until they were superseded by these new Acts are hereby revived in all their former authority, and shall remain in force until the whole of these vital and complicated questions can be considered by the Legislature *de novo*.

God save the Queen. God save the Nation.

Having neatly copied out this new Reform Bill, I at once submitted it to the judgment of the friend who had commended me to Lord Salis-

bury. He expressed both admiration and approval of it so far as his own personal views were concerned, though he was exceedingly sceptical as to any responsible politician being willing to identify himself with a measure which, however equitable, would undoubtedly be denounced by the whole of the Radicals as reactionary, and perhaps even by many who approved of it in theory as Quixotic. Nevertheless he would not suggest any modification of the measure, deeming it the better plan that I should place the manuscript in the hands of Lord Salisbury just as it was.

This I did. Lord Salisbury took precisely the same view as our friend; the measure, he said, expressed his own views exactly, but he felt certain that it would never be accepted by the Legislature, and that it would even be dangerous to propose it. He was honestly convinced that a majority of the people throughout the country were in favour of the views expressed in my Reform Bill, and that they would hail its passage into law with delight. But there was no means of ascertaining the real opinion of the people, as they had no effective method of expressing it. One half of them were so disgusted with politicians that they would not take the trouble to vote, and the other half were the tools or dupes of wire-pullers. However, he stated that he intended to take the opinions of Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain upon the matter, and also to submit the measure to the Queen, after which he would write to me at length.

In the course of a fortnight I received from the Marquis a long Memorandum, which I here transcribe.

"SIR,—After giving much further consideration to the proposals for a new measure of Reform which you

were good enough to submit to me, I beg to renew on my own behalf the assurance which I gave to you verbally on first seeing your manuscript, that I attach to your work the highest possible value, and to add the opinion that if the propositions you have formulated could be carried into law a new and brighter day would dawn for our country.

"But I have grave doubts as to whether they can be carried into law. A Democracy is very difficult to deal with, and it is specially difficult to undo anything that has once been done, however foolish or unjust it may be. The obstacles do not arise so much from the people themselves as from their so-called leaders and guides. In a country like this, where we have two great parties, one will always oppose legislation which is brought forward by the other. Only a crisis which threatened the very existence of the nation in some sudden and dangerous form, and which appealed to the national imagination and patriotism, would unite these parties. No doubt the evils arising from recent legislation do threaten the nation's life, but they do so in a manner which cannot be perceived or felt by the people at large, and which therefore makes no impression upon the mind of the nation as a whole. Nevertheless if the leaders of both parties could be brought to realise the peril, and to agree upon a policy for coping with it, no formidable difficulties would arise from the people themselves. The mere fact that the people are apathetic on these matters is sufficient guarantee as to this.

"But in the present case the laws which we seek to modify or to abrogate are the work of one of the two parties, and that party would of course stultify itself were it to

sanction such a policy; consequently it will work with all its might and main against it. Political parties never admit that they make mistakes. We could only succeed, then, after a series of pitched battles between the two parties, ending in a hand-to-hand fight. Such fighting as that implies earnestness, and politicians are never in earnest,—except in regard to office and its emoluments. I confess frankly that I could not confidently rely upon three of my own colleagues in such a conflict as I foreshadow.

“Balfour, who leads the Lower House, and would therefore have to bear the brunt of the fighting on such a measure as you have sketched, absolutely declines to even consider the matter. He thinks it a hare-brained scheme. The utmost he will concede is that the proposals on Capital and Labour might with advantage be embodied in a separate Act. But he is aghast at the bare idea of seriously proposing to repeal the Franchise Laws and the Land Laws, though he dislikes them as much as you and I do. It is curious that a man should be willing to perpetuate that which he dislikes, and which he knows is ruining the country; but that is politics. In this country we are great worshippers of Precedent. If a thing is unprecedented, that fact is quite enough to damn it irrevocably. How, then, you will ask, were the first precedents made? The question is a fair one, and honestly compels me to answer it by saying that an original precedent could only be made by people who were in solemn earnest, and were willing to brave the opposition which an unprecedented course always evokes. You will retort that this is precisely our position to-day, and I admit it. But what if we have not the leaders

who are in solemn earnest? Certainly Balfour is not earnest, except in urging that we should leave matters alone, and drift on to our predestined doom.

“Chamberlain is even worse, for he affects to regard the legislation which we seek to repeal as beneficent, and he threatens to leave the Government if any such measure as you have sketched is even suggested. Yet he calls himself a Conserver! This is politics again. The fact is that Chamberlain, though with us, is not of us, and has never been of us. We accepted him as a colleague through one of those compromises which are the bane of our politics, and which throttle everything that is earnest and thorough: there has always been friction between us; and between ourselves I should be thankful if some cause of difference were to arise which would separate us once more. For Chamberlain is aggressive and ambitious, overbearing and headstrong, and altogether a most difficult fellow to work with. Still, he has a following both in the Legislature and in the country, and the question is whether that following is strong enough to place us in a minority, or whether by a bold policy we should not attract enough support from the more moderate section of the Radicals to more than counterbalance the defection of Chamberlain and his so-called Progressives. Personally, I believe we should, and that if we appealed to the country on the basis which you have laid down we should come back to power the strongest Government that this country has ever seen. But I cannot get Balfour to share this view. He fears Chamberlain is more formidable than I imagine him to be.

“I had written thus far when I was summoned by the Queen to a special audience. When I waited upon Her Majesty I found her to be greatly

interested and excited with regard to your proposed measure, a copy of which I had sent her. 'The author of that measure is a wise man,' said the Queen. 'I hope you will see that he is rewarded, and well provided for.' She is most enthusiastic over your proposals, and declares that this is the only common-sense measure she has ever seen. When I ventured to intimate that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to carry such a measure, and that even if carried it would entail considerable unpopularity, Her Majesty only asked, 'Is it right?' I was bound to admit that I believed it to be right. 'Then,' said the Queen, 'do what is right, and never mind the consequences.' To that I could answer nothing, except to say that I would use my best endeavours to carry out what I believed to be right, and also to please my Sovereign. Her Majesty thanked me and informed me that she would now—"

It is the wont of dreams, whether they come through the gate of ivory or the gate of horn, to break off

abruptly at the most critical moment, and mine was no exception to the rule. My servant entered with hot water—superfluous surely, my Radical friends will say, for a man who even in a dream could frame such monstrous propositions—and I woke to realise that the third day of December had come and the new Parliament would meet ere it had gone. What Her Majesty confided to Lord Salisbury I never learned, but that it was something wholly wise and good I am sure. Nor, strive as I would, have I ever succeeded in recapturing that dream.

—With what dull pain
Compass'd how eagerly I sought to
strike
Into that wondrous track of dreams
again!
But no two dreams are like.

And thus mine ended, cut off prematurely at the moment of promise, like the famous speech of Civilis on the broken bridge, for each who reads it to complete as he will.

JOHN BULL, *Junior*.

CHRONICLES OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.¹

FOR very many people, and in particular for those who have come at all under the spell of these great northern solitudes, if only in their outskirts, the Hudson's Bay Company is a name full of attractive and mysterious significance. Hitherto, so far as I am aware, there has been little opportunity of gratifying one's curiosity as to the life led by the men in the service of the great company. I remember on one occasion, nearly thirty years ago, being camped upon a lake in the back country of Ontario, perhaps a hundred miles north of the nearest town, and my imagination was pleasingly stimulated by that fact and by the impressive loneliness of forest, lake, and rapid. One night, however, there stole out of the gloom a birch-bark canoe and a sinewy, swarthy individual, almost as dark as an Indian, stepped into the flare of the camp-fire and made himself, as in the circumstances was perfectly legitimate, very much at home for a week. The young man was a gentleman and bore a Highland name; but the point of the incident is that he was in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and had but a few days previously arrived from some point verging on the Polar regions where he had not seen a white man for five years; a life-time as it seemed to us youngsters, and we looked at him and listened to him with awe. Our

pretensions to adventure in the wilderness, but three days of paddle and portage from a town where you might need your dress-clothes four evenings in the week, sank into insignificance as we realised by degrees the kind of life our still somewhat tongue-tied visitor had led. The latter indeed well repaid the primitive entertainment afforded him, though it took him some little time to get back the power of ready speech. The wild and lonely surroundings amid which he told his story helped materially to impress it upon the mind and to create a permanent disposition to hear and know something more of the great corporation that held sway for so many generations over so vast and shadowy a region. In short, the Hudson's Bay Company has long been in sore need of a chronicler; and now two have come forward almost simultaneously, and each has done his work in so complete a fashion that it would be invidious, and indeed unnecessary for our purpose here to draw comparisons between them.

In spite of his biographers many of us perhaps still think of Prince Rupert only as a dashing and reckless leader of cavalry. The fact of his name being written in big letters over most of unsettled Canada in belated atlases did little probably to enlarge our notions of him. Whatever may be our shortcomings in this respect Messrs. Bryce and Wilson have now given us the opportunity at any rate of making up for them and understanding what a very real part the Prince played in the inauguration of the British fur-trade. England,

¹ THE GREAT COMPANY (1667-1871); by Beckles Wilson. In two volumes. London, 1900.

² THE REMARKABLE HISTORY OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY; by George Bryce, M.A., LL.D. London, 1900.

in the days of the last two Stuarts, cut, as everybody knows, a very undignified figure in European polity; but in things which we know now to be of more consequence she was extremely busy. Among the crowds of claimants to the gratitude of Charles after the Restoration, came many of adventurous tendencies asking for trading-privileges on far-off shores. These concessions cost nothing; indeed they were sometimes to his Majesty's profit; accordingly, when Prince Rupert, whose moral claim upon his cousin was immense, asked for nothing more than the monopoly of trade in a vague untraden territory between the French settlements in America and the North Pole, Charles, as Mr. Wilson remarks, was no doubt greatly relieved. The Prince, when his cavalry-days were over, had turned sailor, commanded the royal fleet till there was little left of it, and with the remnant had for some years prosecuted a lively and profitable business on the Spanish Main, without too nice a distinction of nationality in his captures. He had returned to England with a varied and useful knowledge of the outer world, and a keen interest in exploration and scientific pursuits. He was, in short, the very man to become patron of a great over-sea enterprise.

The French fur-trade in Canada was then no secret in England, and the Jesuits' narratives gave terrible notions of the country in which it was pursued. This, however, had not been extended to Hudson's Bay, a region then only known to the boldest seamen. Of all this great district to the north the French as yet knew little; of rivalry there they did not dream. It remained for two Frenchmen, renegades in a sense, to disturb this serenity and show to Englishmen what a chance was theirs.

Chouart des Groseilliers was a daring French trapper, and had married, it may be noted, a daughter of the Quebec pilot, Abraham Martin, who gave his first name to the plain where a century later Wolfe and Montcalm fell. He had found a staunch comrade in a Huguenot gentleman (one of the very few Protestants in Canada) named Radisson, whose sister he subsequently married. Able, fearless, and energetic the two friends accomplished great things in the perilous path they trod. For a whole season they traded and explored to the northwest of Lake Superior, and in addition to acquiring large stocks of furs they convinced themselves of the value of a great untapped fur-bearing region to the north. On returning to Quebec they urged the authorities to give them means to explore this unknown land in French interests. The Canadian government, however, were sceptical, laughed at the idea of rivals, and moreover, mistrusted their suitors, partly, perhaps, because they were boastful-seeming reckless men, and partly, no doubt, because they were Protestants.

With prescient eyes and unabated faith, but disgusted with their own people, the pair then sought New England, where their story was believed and their scheme approved. Money, however, was scarce in Boston and badly needed for home consumption; and though urged by an English official, one Colonel Carr, to take their scheme to London, the brothers-in-law, wishing to give their own countrymen another chance, went to Paris instead. There they met only with rebuffs till their New England acquaintance, Colonel Carr, opportunely came on the scene again. He had faith in the two Frenchmen as well as influence at Court, and found means to despatch them to England, remarking that he thought

they were the most valuable present he could make to King Charles. They took letters also to Prince Rupert, and this proved to be the best thing they could have done. A group of gentlemen, headed by the Prince, took up their cause, introduced them to the King, and in due course provided them with a well-found ship, commanded by a New England captain of their own selection.

June 3rd, 1668, is a memorable date in the annals of the Hudson's Bay Company, for on that day the *Noxsuch*, of fifty tons, sailed from the Thames to commence its first chapter, after Prince Rupert and a goodly company had gathered in the cabin to drink success to the voyage in bumpers of Madeira. Radisson remained in England to await events or for business reasons, and in the meantime married the daughter of Sir John Kirke, a famous navigator and member of the new Company. When the *Noxsuch* landed Groseilliers with that first instalment of men and goods upon the desolate shores of the Bay, no sail had appeared there for a quarter of a century, and the Indians were astonished to see these white men, who commenced operations with the inevitable fort. The result of this initial venture was a rich cargo of peltries which reached London the next season to gladden the eyes of the Gentlemen Adventurers and confirm them in their resolutions to form a company and apply for a charter.

Groseilliers, in the meantime, had stayed on the Bay where there was much to be done. The tribes who knew nothing of trading had to be persuaded into the business, others, who had already dealt with the French, to be diverted to the new fort. "Tell all your friends," said the Frenchmen, "to come hither; King Charles will give you double what

King Lewis gives;" and indeed he could afford to be liberal, for a glance at the map will show what water-carriage to Hudson's Bay meant. In the next July to Groseilliers's delight his brother-in-law sailed up to the lonely fort in a fresh ship, with another cargo from London, and with the good news of the arrival of the *Noxsuch* and the preparations that were making for further efforts. The new Company consisted of seventeen noblemen and gentlemen headed by Prince Rupert, who in due course received from the King's own hand "one of the most celebrated instruments," says Mr. Wilson, "which ever passed from monarch to subject, and which, though almost incessantly in dispute was perpetuated in full force through two centuries." The recipients of the Charter were "The Governor and Company of Merchant Adventurers trading into Hudson Bay." Their territory, described as Rupert's Land, comprised the immense region whose waters flowed into the Bay. It was indeed a vast tract; how vast its grantees knew not, for even the formation of that part of the continent was as yet imperfectly understood. For all the Adventurers knew the Pacific was not more than two hundred miles west of the Bay. Yet it was in the stirring days of La Salle's and St. Luson's explorations and of Colbert's Ministry, and in the north-west French traders had pushed as far as the great rapids of the Sault St. Marie by which the waters of Superior rush down into those of Huron. News now filtered through the wilderness to the French out-posts that strange ships had been seen in Hudson's Bay, and they did not like it. For the French, by title of very dubious land-exploration, claimed the whole basin of the Bay, while the English claimed it by virtue of the undoubted fact of prior navigation.

These shadowy claims were argued for a century and must not detain us here. Both our authors, however, examine them at some length.

The Company's offices were in Broad Street, which sounds very modern and commonplace. Their first official sale of furs, held at Garraway's coffee-house, created considerable excitement and was quite a fashionable event, the Duke of York and John Dryden, among other celebrities, being present. Hitherto English-cured furs had been of poor account, people of wealth and quality resorting to the Continental markets. But the nearer the Pole the better the fur, and England had now got in next to the Pole. The Company's weekly board-meetings, at first held in Prince Rupert's house in Spring Gardens and afterwards in Broad Street, were very serious functions to those concerned, and for those outside possessed a mysterious air of romance. Originally the conventional bead formed the chief article of commerce, but by advice of the shrewd Radisson, guns, axes, kettles, ammunition, knives, and so forth were given the chief place. Both the Company's ships and their officers were constantly beset by throngs of would-be private adventurers anxious to share in the lucrative traffic; but, one need hardly say, no encouragement was given to the clamorous public by these exclusive and aristocratic traders.

To Groseilliers and Radisson the Company were under priceless obligations. But they were born intriguers, restless, intrepid, and contemptuous of plodding ways and plodding people—and perhaps rightly, the Great Company throughout the first period of its existence went slowly. Beginning with Fort Charles at the bottom of the Bay they had crept on to the establishment of Fort Nelson, seven hundred miles away on the western shore, before the end of the

first decade, while the French, labouring over-land from Canada, had established a post or two between the British forts. Each claimed the country, and though the English with ocean-carriage and cheap goods easily out-did their rivals in trade, they met with infinite annoyance from the efforts of the French to poison the minds of the interior tribes against them, while continuous bad blood often generated quarrels involving destruction both of property and life. The Company's method of procedure was a passive one, namely, to keep strictly to their forts and await the trade that came to them. Radisson and Groseilliers had by their enterprise and influence secured so good a connection, further increased by the Company's fair and liberal dealing, that the latter, when it had achieved four forts and four ships and was paying a dividend of two hundred per cent., thought the limit of success was reached, an attitude which greatly irritated the two enterprising Frenchmen and in part caused their defection. The rank and file of its servants were made of poor stuff, young fellows who had failed at home, in London or Bristol, many of them without either physique or courage. The discipline of a fort, says Mr. Wilson, was that of a man-of-war. The Governor was an autocrat, and had the little company at his mercy; he was often, too, a choleric, hard-swearing person, and very liberal with the lash, which was within his privilege. The clerks and servants were not allowed even to speak to a native, or indeed to walk outside the stockade without leave; their spare time, which was considerable, hung with unwholesome heaviness on their hands, as may be well imagined, and was chiefly spent in eating, drinking and sleeping. At the trading-seasons the natives with their furs,

of which beaver was the principal item, were admitted by twos and threes within the stockade and did their dealing with the chief trader through a window. It is not surprising therefore that the first half-century of the Company's rule in Rupert's Land produced but a scanty crop of those hardy hunters and explorers which so distinguished French Canada; nor yet that the Company's forts thus manned were frequently captured by the French under conditions which make disagreeable reading to an Englishman.

Of the two Frenchmen who were the practical founders of the Company, the Huguenot Radisson was the most permanently conspicuous. These sluggish doings, however prosperous, were not at all to his taste, and still less so were the governors of the forts, to one of whom he found it necessary to administer a severe thrashing. Radisson's career from 1670 to 1685 is a marvellous story of valour, duplicity, prescience, and hardihood. Disgusted with the Company he, with Groseilliers, returned to his native allegiance, and did much damage to his former employers; but mistrusted by the French authorities, partly on account of his English wife who obstinately refused to leave her country, he returned again to the service of the Company, at their own solicitation, and was equally vigorous against his countrymen. French or English was probably the same to Radisson; he did great things and made fortunes for other people, but was himself always poor and does not seem to have greatly cared for money. Our space does not admit of even a lucid picture of this "Prince of bushrangers, traitors, and liars," as Mr. Wilson calls him, though Mr. Bryce is much less harsh in his verdict. No ships were so crazy, no crews so timid but Radisson could compel them to carry

him through the stormiest seas. The awful wilderness that stretches from Lake Superior to Hudson's Bay had no terrors even in winter for him. Indians, who cared for no one, trembled before Radisson and did his bidding without question. Equally at home in London, Paris, and Quebec, he affected always the exaggerated costume of the backwoods,—a fur cap, tangled beard and hair, bare neck, leather leggings and moccasins, with a long knife stuck in his girdle. Thus he appeared at Court, on the Mall, or at the play, and was for a time a familiar figure in fashionable society. He cracked jokes with the King, talked business with the Duke of York, Prince Rupert, and Captain Churchill (to be better known as the Duke of Marlborough), was often closeted with Colbert at Paris, and was both dreaded and mistrusted in Canada, where he and Groseilliers were burned in effigy, and a price ultimately set upon his head; indeed a whole chapter would not suffice to do justice to this strange man's adventurous life. It only remains to say here that he spent an obscure old age in England in receipt of a small pension, and died prosaically in his bed, in prosaic Islington, at the age of seventy-four. Groseilliers, who made his peace with the Canadians, died earlier after some years of quiet life on the St. Lawrence.

Big dividends, in the meantime, kept rolling in from the Bay into the pockets of "the smug ancient gentlemen" as some envious wit called the proprietors of the Charter. But a terrible catastrophe was now brooding. In the throes of the Revolution of 1688 a romantic old French Canadian noble named De Troyes conceived a notion that he had been chosen by Heaven to drive the heretic English from the Bay. He asked leave of his government to make the attempt and

it was granted, the trifling obstacle of the peace existing between the two nations being generously overlooked. De Troyes was fortunate in securing, as his lieutenants, the three brothers Le Moine, the most warlike family in Canada. Eighty Canadians and thirty regular soldiers completed his following; and the perilous over-land route was the one chosen. It was nearly six hundred miles from Montreal to the foot of Hudson's Bay as the crow flies, and a country over which, to borrow a familiar metaphor, even a crow would have to carry his rations. Never surely in the seventeenth century did another purely military expedition of white men attempt a similar enterprise! It was just three months from the time of starting when this little band of intrepid men broke out of the forests and found themselves on the shores of the northern sea where at the mouth of Moose River stood the nearest British fort carrying fourteen guns. Upon this they fell forthwith, capturing the score or so of dismayed and unprepared apprentices who occupied it. Fort Charles on Rupert River, the oldest post of all, was much stronger, but this also was captured and the fortifications destroyed. The elder of the Le Moines, better known as D'Iberville, though only twenty-four, was the virtual leader of the French. He was already conspicuous as the scourge of the New England frontier and was yet to win a much wider fame. While Fort Charles was being attacked on shore D'Iberville himself put out in two canoes with a small party and captured one of the Company's vessels that was lying in the Bay. The French now hurried on to Fort Albany, the strongest of all the British forts, and mounted with forty-three guns. So paralysed were the English by the celerity of their hardy foe that

the Governor, after a brief resistance, surrendered without even the honours of war, a fortress which besides the usual supplies contained fifty thousand francs' worth of furs. Fort Nelson, seven hundred miles up the Bay and too remote for De Troyes's immediate consideration, was now the only post of any importance left to the Company. The French leaders proceeded to collect their prisoners in one of the captured forts. Some of them returned to Canada with De Troyes in the capacity of pack-bearers; many were killed by the Indians; the remainder were in due course carried to France by D'Iberville in the ship he had captured.

The wrath and excitement at the Company's headquarters in Broad Street may well be imagined, and none the less perhaps as it had some cause to blush for the poltroonery of its servants. There is some irony too in the situation from the fact that the great John Churchill was at this humiliating moment at the head of the Company's affairs. The noblemen and gentlemen who still held most of the stock made a tremendous outcry, placarded London and filled specially published newsletters with their undeniable wrongs. Their outcry was so effectual, and perhaps so justifiable, that when King William declared war he quoted the Company's treatment by the French as one of his grievances. The two hundred per cent. which, by good management as it must be confessed, had steadily flowed into the pockets of the smug ancient gentlemen, now vanished entirely for a long term of years. That these gentlemen, however, sat tamely down under the staggering blow the Canadians had dealt them must not be supposed for a moment. On the contrary, Hudson's Bay became for the next decade or so such a scene of conflict, of sea-fights and land-fights,

of taking and re-taking of forts, that it renders lucidity almost impossible in any narrative that must be brief. Indeed, when the treaty of Ryswick in 1697 decreed that affairs in these regions should be restored to their condition before the war, it merely raised a fresh ferment; for Europeans in North America rarely waited for such formalities between their home-governments, and small wars were frequently raging in America, while monarchs were embracing each other in Europe. The Company presented a bill for damages amounting to nearly a quarter of a million sterling which Louis the Fourteenth agreed to pay—but never paid!

In 1696, however, D'Iberville performed a memorable exploit in the Bay, which was characteristic of the daring genius that has kept his memory so green. Starting from Newfoundland with four ships-of-war granted him by the French King, he entered the Bay with the object of attacking Fort Nelson. Three English ships, unknown to him but expected by the garrison, had passed through the Straits just before him. In the meantime D'Iberville in his ship, the *PELICAN*, had outsailed his three consorts who were delayed by ice, and slipping by the English ships, unseen and unseeing, appeared alone off Fort Nelson. The governor was greatly surprised and disturbed, having calculated on the protection of the British squadron; D'Iberville was also perplexed by the non-arrival of his consorts. After two days of suspense three sail appeared on the horizon, the precise number expected by either combatant. The French leader, however, confident that they were his friends, weighed anchor and stood out towards them. He soon discovered his mistake, but seems to have been in no way dismayed by it; the British

ships, it is true, were each considerably smaller than the *PELICAN* which carried two hundred and fifty men and forty-three guns. Mr. Wilson gives a thrilling account of the desperate struggle which ensued. The *HAMPSHIRE*, after four hours of constant hammering, went down with sails set and all on board; the *DERING*, though in a terrible plight, managed to get to shore, while the flag-ship, the *HUDSON'S BAY*, ultimately surrendered to the *PELICAN*, who herself had nearly half her men killed and wounded. In the meantime a storm arose and night fell upon the scene. The two ships, the victor and the vanquished, rudderless and crippled, lay tossing side by side in a terrific tempest, their straining cables alone offering them a doubtful safeguard from destruction upon an iron coast. On the British ship, says a survivor, "the wounded and dead lay heaped up, with so little separation one from the other that silence and moans alone distinguished them; all were icy cold and covered with blood." In course of time the cable broke with a shock, and a piercing cry went up from the shambles on the forecastle; Providence befriended them, however, and the shattered hull drifted on to some level marsh-land. The *PELICAN's* cable held, but the crew had ultimately to wade ashore up to their necks in water, and when there, unlike the English to whom the fort was open, had neither food nor drink nor shelter. D'Iberville's three other vessels arrived in the nick of time, and after a creditable defence Fort Nelson was captured. The governor and garrison, with the survivors of the wrecked ships, marched out of the fort with drums beating, colours flying, and all the honours of war. "But whither?" says Mr. Wilson; for hundreds of miles of sterile wilderness lay around them and the

dreadful winter of the North was already in the air. The conquerors, if not with pity, looked on with something of admiration at the undaunted front with which the Englishmen marched out to so dire a prospect. How they fared we are not told.

The French, in spite of their military success, failed signally as traders in the Bay. Their Company had no ships, and land-carriage was desperately laborious. They were constantly short of necessaries themselves, while the Indians, who depended on them, died by the score from hunger. One ghastly story is told of an Indian who having eaten his wife and five of his children, was seized with remorse before he had finished the sixth and the favourite one, whose remains he tenderly buried and departed weeping bitterly.

By the treaty of Utrecht the whole of the Bay was definitely ceded to Great Britain, though, as usual in such cases, some time passed before the French posts were finally evacuated. When thirty years later the long war broke out which resulted in the conquest of Canada, the Company, whose prosperity and dividends had returned, feared a repetition of the old troubles; but the capture of Louisburg by the New Englanders saved the situation. Their forts and their servants multiplied apace, the quality and enterprise of the latter showing a vast improvement. Their operations were extended into remoter wilds, and several attempts were made under their auspices to discover the North-west Passage. Dividends in the meantime averaged about forty per cent. and raised up enemies everywhere who cried aloud at the monopoly of the smug ancient gentlemen, and made strenuous efforts to upset their Charter. Nor was it only with envious traders and capitalists that the Company had to reckon, but often with

its own ships' crews who, stimulated by their employers' large profits, struck more than once for higher wages. The riverside-folk too were unfriendly, eagerly believing the tales to the Company's discredit concocted by its enemies, and often hooted the outgoing ships as they dropped down the Thames.

For this first epoch of the great Company's existence closing with the conquest of Canada, Mr. Beckles Wilson is the fullest and most interesting chronicler. Mr. Bryce rather reserves his space and his information for the last century and a half when the Company's struggles were not with foreign foes but with rivals owning allegiance to the British flag. The conquest of Canada let loose upon the country a horde of independent traders, disbanded soldiers and others, Scotsmen and particularly Highlanders predominating. The numerous and far-reaching trading-posts of the French still dotted the western wilderness as far as the Red River prairies. Their officers and capitalists had in great part vanished with the change of flag; but the rank and file were there to initiate the enterprising Scotsmen who now flocked to Canada with fresh capital and fresh energies. Till the close of the Revolutionary war the Canadian fur-merchants worked as independent traders. In 1783, however, they banded themselves together and founded the North-West Company, which for so many years waged a deadly rivalry with the older corporation to the north of it. Long indeed before the end of the century their outermost stations, like those of Hudson's Bay, were dotted over the region now known as Manitoba. There was a wealth of romance about the fur-trade to which the presence of the French-Canadian with his folklore, his light heart, his love of song

and laughter, added colour. It was the romance of a northern land, clean and pure and wholesome, of bright waters, now fretting in rocky channels, now rolling before pine-scented breezes in forest-locked lakes, now quiet and gleaming with the gorgeous shadows of autumnal woods. To feel the noiseless leap of the canoe beneath the paddle's quiet and strenuous stroke among such scenes is a memory that few people who possess would readily part with. It makes it easy to picture the long birch-bark canoes of olden days with their load of furs and ten or a dozen stalwart paddlers swinging down with the rapid currents of the Ottawa or St. Lawrence, and singing to the measure of their well-timed strokes the familiar songs of the Canadian woods. Mr. Bryce treats all these features of the old fur-trading life with tender and well qualified hand. The Company's stations on Hudson's Bay had their evil moments, to be sure, in the Napoleonic wars; but their most formidable danger was the North-West Company of Montreal. By the close of the last century both Companies were operating on the Pacific coast, and the founder of the Astor family was competing with them.

The visitor to the North-West now rarely sails up Lake Superior as he did in days gone by, and he misses much, for the grandeur and solitude of Thunder Bay as you enter it, particularly in gloomy weather, over dark tumbling waters, is unforgettable. Here stood, and still stands with a station on the Canadian-Pacific Railway, the old central trading-post of the North-West Company, Fort William. Then, as now, it marked the head of the great lake-navigation and tapped the arteries of the West. Here, at the mouth of the Kaministiquia, exactly a hundred years ago, arose a small town surrounded by a

high and strong palisade. It soon became the centre where hundreds of rugged mortals, Scots, English, and Canadians, French and Scotch half-breeds, and native Indians foregathered for both business and pleasure. Here was a large hall, hung with portraits, a board-room, and comfortable quarters for the great men of the Company during their annual visitations, besides barracks for the clerks and traders, ruder shelter for the throngs of trappers, and numerous warehouses, stores, and shops for the upkeep of an industry that reached from Montreal to the Pacific.

One hardly needs to be told of the days and weeks of orgie that were inevitable in such a place as this. The North-West Company, with their Scottish colonial stock-holders and immense following of French and half-breeds, were much more hilarious than their soberer rivals of Hudson's Bay. Christmas at Fort William Mr. Bryce describes as being the season of wildest hilarity: "The luxuries of East and West were gathered together and offerings to Bacchus were neither of poor quality nor limited in extent. With Scotch story and Jacobite song, intermingled with *La Claire Fontaine* or *Malbrouck s'en va*, days and nights passed merrily away." It was not only among the wild half-breeds and hunters camped in and around the station that revelry was rife; we are given glimpses of partners and factors themselves seated on the floor of their dining-hall and with poker, tongs, and shovel paddling imaginary canoes over imaginary rapids with Bacchanalian shout and song.

The most notable incident that marked the beginning of the century for the Hudson's Bay Company was the advent of Lord Selkirk with his colony of Highlanders. This philan-

thropic young nobleman felt much compassion for the Highland crofters who were rapidly disappearing from out the north of Scotland. He had already planted a successful colony of them in the fertile province of Prince Edward Island, and he had much better have kept to it; but he was bitten with accounts of the fertility of the Red River while at the same time failing to grasp its social drawbacks. The agricultural settler, one need hardly remark, was the fur-trader's natural foe; but for special reasons a certain number of the Hudson's Bay Company's Board were not averse to his Lordship's settlement, while the latter, to make matters secure, bought enough stock to secure a majority for his scheme. He was granted a territory about the size of Great Britain, and for four years in succession a shipload of emigrants was sent to a settlement on the Red River near Fort Garry, the modern Winnipeg. It is a long and melancholy story. The crops were all that had been represented, though the grasshoppers were a lively and unpleasant surprise; but the wild half-breed population, backed up by the North-West Company, had sworn expulsion or extermination to the intruders. A United Empire Loyalist, Macdonnell, had been made governor of the settlement; but it was of no avail, and a series of outrages culminated in 1816 with a regular attack, in which a new Governor, Semple, with twenty of his people fell. Lord Selkirk spared no efforts to put matters right. Having

tried to get justice in Montreal and failed, owing to the strength of the fur-trading interest, he adopted another plan. The two Swiss regiments of Watteville and de Meuron, who had served in the pay of Great Britain during the last war, were now being disbanded in Canada. Lord Selkirk took a hundred of the soldiers into his employment with a promise of land in his colony, and with this force behind him, and his own authority as a magistrate, he made his way to Fort William, and practically taking possession of the station, arrested in deserved but somewhat high-handed fashion those North-Western officials who had been concerned in the slaughter of his colonists.

But colonising was not to prosper in the North-West for many a long year to come. The two rival Companies made up their quarrels and united in discouraging the hoe and plough. Lord Wolseley's expedition to the Red River, sixty years later, was directed against the lawless spirits who represented the old dislike to civilisation. I myself have good reason to remember the sort of talk that some thirty years or so ago used to be rife in Canada about the prospects of the newly opened and little known North-West. Even then the dislike of the fur-trading population to new settlers was one among many drawbacks that deferred till ten years later the real opening of the country.

A. G. BRADLEY.